

Journal
of the
American Historical Society of Germans from Russia



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26 to July 1, 1979 Seattle, Washington

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members of AHSGR:

This issue of the *Journal* brings you a comprehensive report on our Tenth International Convention, held at Seattle, Washington, on June 26 to July 1, 1979. With an interesting and varied program and unmatched meeting-room facilities, this convention was a thrilling experience for the more than 1000 people who attended its sessions. The convention staff from the Greater Seattle Chapter, chaired by Jean Roth, made this gathering an event which will live long in our memories.

As usual, the outstanding features of the convention were informative and inspiring addresses on the history of our people, given by some of our members and by distinguished visitors from abroad. We reproduce these here so that they can be shared by all and can be permanently preserved. Along with these we print the annual reports presented by our officers and committee chairmen, which will give you a picture of the society's accomplishments during the past year.

Reading these reports and addresses is the best substitute for attendance at the convention, but it is not a completely adequate substitute. No printed word can convey the feeling of good fellowship that exists at our conventions. Attendance at one of these gatherings is a thrill that stays with you for life. Make plans now to come to the next one, which will be held at Dearborn, Michigan, on July 6-13, 1980.

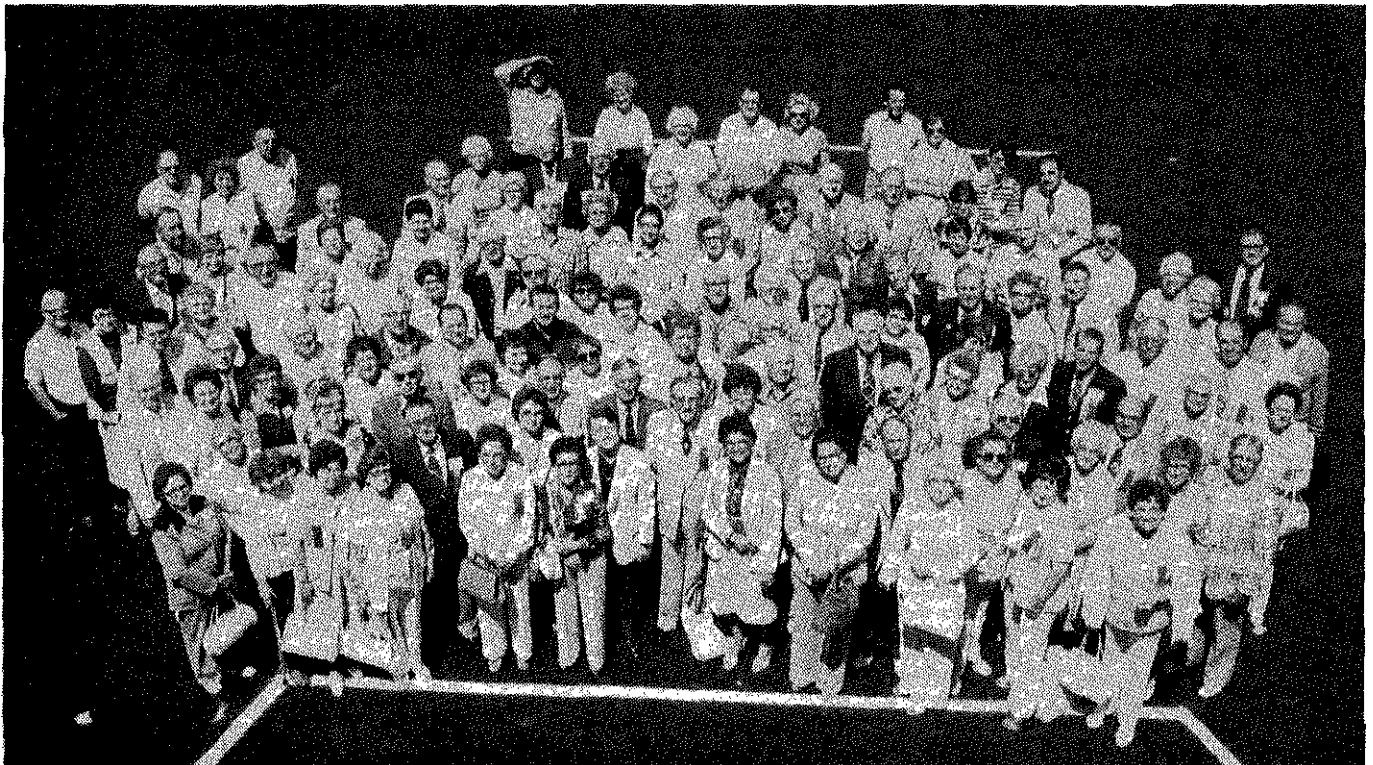
The Seattle Convention will be long remembered for the fact that it was the occasion for the launching of a drive for funds to realize a dream that we have had since the founding of the society in 1968: *a building to accommodate our headquarters staff, our library and archives, our genealogical records, our publications office, and our stock of journals and books for sale.* With our growth in membership and activities, such a building has become essential to provide the services desired by our members. Some of the addresses printed here give information about our needs and our plans.

Sincerely,
Adam Giesinger President

**TWO VERY SPECIAL GROUPS WHO
ATTENDED THE CONVENTION**



The **AHSGR** members pictured above are indeed very special. Born in Russia they emigrated with their families to the **Americas**. They add much from their personal experiences to our sessions.



Funds invested in AHSGR will assure benefits to our children and children's children for many generations to come. Life memberships help the society provide those extra services and publications that are available for our enjoyment and research. We say "thank you" to all life members, those pictured above as well as the others who were unable to be with us in Seattle.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: REFLECTIONS ON MY YEAR AS PRESIDENT

Adam Giesinger, International President

I has been a great privilege to serve this society as president during the past year. The year has been interesting and very busy. Because for the first time we have had a president who lives at a distance from our headquarters, it has had to be, in some respects, a year of new beginnings. The changed situation made necessary a reorganization of some of our procedures and operations. The fact that my predecessor, Ruth Amen, agreed to stay with us in the capacity of executive director helped immeasurably to make the transition a smooth one. Ruth and I have, I think, worked out a system that makes it possible to operate our head office efficiently with a non-resident president. To Ruth and her staff, Linda and JoAnn, I want to express my warm thanks for services to this society much above and beyond the call of duty. The scope of the operation that they manage so successfully at Lincoln has to be seen to be believed.

I am grateful also to the members of our board of directors for the loyal cooperation and support that they have given me during the past year. These men and women serve the society with enthusiasm and zeal, freely devoting their time and talents to our work. A good measure of their devotion to the society is their large-scale attendance at board meetings four times a year, usually in distant cities, at their own expense. Without their generous voluntary services we could not operate with our present membership fees.

And finally, I am grateful to the many members of the society who have written me letters during the past year, and in earlier years. The interest in our work among our membership makes it a joy to be president. My correspondence has been exceptionally heavy. Were it not for the fact that I am retired and hence able to devote full time to this job, I could not cope with it. Although I can not always answer your letters promptly, let me assure you that I am pleased to receive them.

This society never ceases to amaze me. If I had not seen the development of the last eleven years with my own eyes, I would not believe it. We have defied the laws of probability and fashioned an organization whose success, as any mathematically inclined social observer could have told us, was highly improbable.

There were at least two reasons why success was improbable. Both have their roots in the history of our people.

Our forefathers had many virtues of which we can be proud. They were an honest, God-fearing people, persevering in the face of great adversity, industrious much beyond the ordinary, under conditions that would have daunted a less courageous people. These qualities made it possible for them to undertake the difficult migration to an unknown Russia and to establish successful colonies in that foreign environment, and later to migrate again, this time across the seas to the Americas to pioneer anew. They have passed these qualities on to us of this generation, who are making a notable contribution in many spheres of American and Canadian life.

But our forefathers had one great weakness. They were not inclined to united action on a broad scale. There is a historical reason for this. The Germany they left in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was not the united nation of a later day, but a conglomeration of several hundred independent states, ruled by petty prince lings constantly quarreling with each other. There were bitter religious divisions and consequent religious intolerance. The emigrants to Russia came from a variety of these German states, spoke different dialects, had different customs, and reflected the religious divisions of their homeland. Because of these differences in their traditions and outlook, they tended to distrust each other and failed throughout their history in Russia to present a united front, which would have helped them so much to preserve the heritage to which they clung so tenaciously.

The fact that our society exists, and is thriving, indicates that we have overcome the parochialism and distrust of each other that was traditional among our forefathers. But we must be ever watchful that we do not revert to type! Occasionally, unfortunately, one sees signs of it.

There was a second reason why the formation of a society such as ours once appeared to be an improbable event. The more senior among us well remember a time when descendants of Germans from Russia found it expedient to forget their family background. During the two world wars, in which Germany was the enemy, Germans were unpopular among large sections of the American and Canadian population. The Communist revolution in Russia and the subsequent world menace of Communism also made Russians unpopular. Under such circumstances, if your family had connections with both Germany and Russia, keeping quiet about it appeared to many to be the best policy. That thousands of us eventually came out into the open and acknowledged our origin was an act of courage that seemed inconceivable not too many

years ago. Some of our people are still uncomfortable with the label. They should not be. We have nothing to be ashamed of.

My own experience is probably typical of many, I was interested in the story of my forefathers, but all my friends of the same origin appeared to be indifferent. I started collecting materials on our history in the 1940's and eventually decided to write a book about it for my children. I wanted them to know something about the background of their German-speaking grandparents. An event of 1968 gave me a wider vision.

It was late in September 1968 when David J. Miller of Greeley, Colorado, to whom my name had been given by a mutual acquaintance, wrote me a letter telling me about a new society of Germans from Russia being organized in Colorado and inviting me to join. I replied, expressing interest, and a few weeks later was invited to become a member of the first board of directors. I must confess that at that point I had some doubts about the viability of the venture. It was fortunate for us that the organizing group chose Dave Miller as our first president, for Dave was an optimist who refused to accept defeat. He carried the fledgling society financially, took many hours away from his busy law practice to devote to society affairs and used his office personnel to do the society's work. He received substantial help in Colorado from the William Urbachs, John Werner, Chester Krieger, Gerda Walker, Jerry Lehr, Alice Heinz, Rachel Amen, and others, and moral support from a distance from Art Flegel, Emma Haynes, Joseph Height, Ted Wenzlaff, and others.

The founders' main hope was to collect materials on the history of our people and to establish a repository where these materials could be preserved and made available to the members of the society and to historical researchers. They hoped also to publish a yearbook in which articles about our history would appear, for the information of our members and others interested.

Although we had growing pains in the early years, progress was steady. Before our first anniversary, Dave Miller had made arrangements with the Greeley Public Library to serve as repository for our historical materials on Germans from Russia. The materials we then owned were immediately placed in that library and made available for loan to our members. We owe a debt of gratitude to librarian Esther Fromm, a member of this society, and to her staff for the many services contributed to our cause since that time.

The yearbook originally planned did not materialize, but the first of our series of twenty-five *Work Papers* appeared early in 1969. Publication of these became a regular part of our operation. There were two *Work Papers* in 1969, two in 1970 and three a year thereafter. A wealth of historical material of interest to us has appeared in these over the years. Last year Marie Olson, a member of our board, prepared an *Index to the Work Papers*, in which you can find a listing of the articles that have appeared. All *Work Papers* are still available for purchase.

In June 1970 the first of our annual conventions was held at Greeley, Colorado, with what was then a phenomenal registration of 289 people, many of whom had come long distances. We were well on the road to success.

The year 1971 showed in a tangible way how interested our members of that time were in the history of their forefathers. Early in the year we received word about the financial problems that Dr. Karl Stumpp was encountering trying to publish his now well-known book, *The Emigration from Germany to Russia*. He appealed to us for help and the members of this society responded amazingly. Under the leadership of Arthur Flegel donations totaling \$10,000 were collected within a few months and remitted to Dr. Stumpp to finance the printing of his book. Incidentally, in return for this help the society received 1,000 copies of the book, the sale of which gave our finances their first substantial boost. The 1,000 copies were sold out within a year and in 1973 we undertook the financing of a second edition.

A highlight of our early years was our second annual convention held at Lincoln, Nebraska in June 1971. The main speaker on that occasion was Dr. Karl Stumpp, whom we had brought to America for his first extended visit. The 478 persons who attended that convention will always remember his dynamic and inspiring speeches.

After the Lincoln convention, the first of our *Newsletters*, in the present format, went out to all members. They have appeared regularly ever since. In March of this year you received No. 23 of the series.

One other publication of the early years deserves special mention. In the spring of 1973 our cook book, *Kilche Kochen*, first saw the light of day. It has sold twenty-five thousand copies in the last six years and is still a best seller.

By June 1973 it was generally agreed that the problems associated with the founding of the society had been solved and that the policies adopted appeared to be the right formula for success. David Miller decided

that this was a good time for him to pass on the torch to a successor. At the convention in Portland, Oregon, he announced his retirement from the presidency and Ruth Amen of Lincoln, Nebraska, was elected as his successor.

With the foundations so well laid, the progress during Ruth's five-year presidency was phenomenal.

Our publications increased in number and quality. Our members now receive each year, at no cost beyond their membership fee, three issues of *our Journal*, which deals with our history; two issues of *Clues*, our genealogical helper; and three issues of our *Newsletter*, which brings news of society and chapter activities. With constantly rising costs, don't you ever wonder how we manage to do it for that relatively small membership fee?

We have also become book publishers on a considerable scale. In addition to our cook book, mentioned earlier, we have published Mela Meisner Lindsay's novel, *The White Lamb*, which has sold thousands of copies, and Hattie Plum Williams* *The Czar's Germans*, which is also a steady seller. We have acquired the publication rights for and will continue to keep in print the two well known Stumpp works: the picture book, *The German-Russians*, and the valuable genealogical resource, *The Emigration from Germany to Russia*. Other publications are under active consideration.

As a service to our members, we have set up a bookstore at our headquarters, in which we stock all available English-language books on the history of our people. We provide members with an *Annotated Bibliography of Materials Available for Purchase*, in which they can find the materials of special interest to them.

Our archives collection at the Greeley Public Library has grown to hundreds of valuable items, available to our members on interlibrary loan. For the growth of this collection we owe a great deal to the constant solicitude of a pioneer member of our board, Emma Haynes. The archives collection will ever be a monument to her.

Another collection of inestimable value, which is growing rapidly, is our set of genealogical records, undoubtedly the best on our people existing anywhere. This we owe to the special efforts of two pioneer board members who have been heads of our genealogy committee over the years, Gerda Walker and Arthur Flegel. You should make it a special point to visit the genealogy consulting workshop which has been set up for this convention, to see the type of records that we have and to learn about the services available to members and the contribution that you yourself can make to further this work.

There is a vital part of our organization that I have not yet mentioned. It is actually a sister organization, incorporated separately in 1974, the AHSGR Foundation, which is our fund-raising arm. This was nurtured to its present healthy state by Alice Amen Heinz, its first president, who served until a year ago. You will hear much more about the foundation later in our convention program.

I think it is obvious that we are a highly successful society in many respects. But we can not rest on our laurels because we face some serious problems. These are probably not yet obvious to the general membership, but they are real enough. Let me describe them briefly,

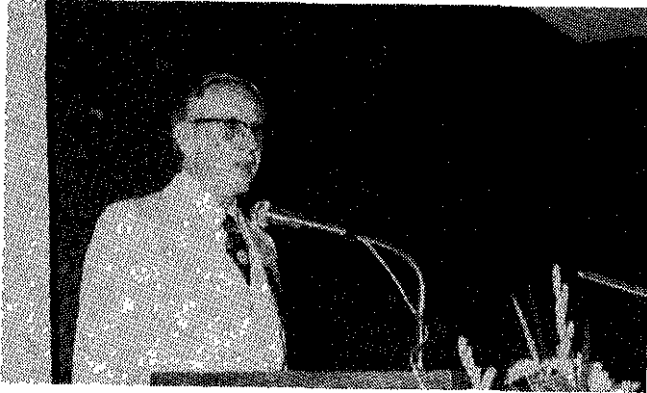
A major problem is the aging of the enthusiasts who founded this society and who have kept it going by devoting their time and talents to it all these years, at no cost to the members. They are tiring and soon they will pass on- Not only will we lose these dedicated volunteer workers who have carried much of the load so far, but the load itself will also greatly increase in the next few years. We shall have more members and more demands for services. Although some of the work will, we hope, always be done by volunteers, it is imperative that we begin *now* to acquire additional qualified staff to give our members the services they want. It is a financial problem but not an insoluble one — **not** for a group as interested in our heritage as we are. In my view, more life memberships would solve this problem most effectively. It takes \$500.00 to buy a life membership, which can be paid off at the rate of \$100.00 a year for five years. We have somewhat over 100 life memberships now. We should have 1,000, or more! Let's make a good start towards that figure at this convention.

A second problem is probably even more urgent. We need space badly for our materials and our workers. We have collected a first class library on the history of our people and a set of genealogical records unequalled anywhere, but we have to store them in borrowed space scattered over the country. We publish and sell books on a considerable scale, but we have to store much of our stock, again in borrowed space. Our headquarters staff has to work in cramped quarters. We need more staff, but we do not have the work space for it. We need most urgently a building to house our archives collection, our genealogical

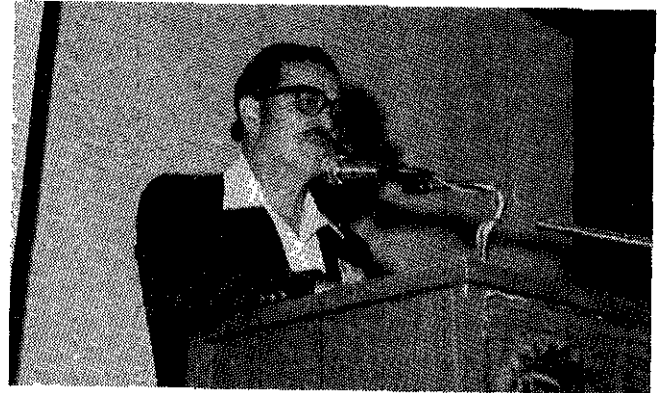
records, our bookstore and our headquarters office. For this purpose we must raise money for a building fund to acquire a site and to construct at least a modest building for our present needs. You'll hear more about this later in the convention.

I urge you most earnestly to respond positively. The records of our heritage are worth preserving. If we of this generation don't do it, it will be too late. Do your part to leave a proud memorial to your forefathers — for your children!

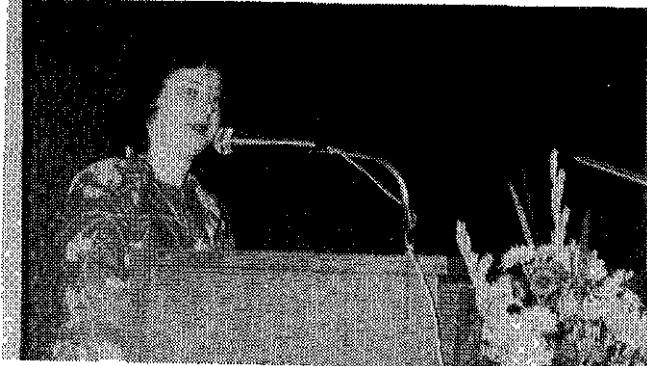
OPENING SESSION PARTICIPANTS



Adam **Giesinger**, International President, presented the keynote address.



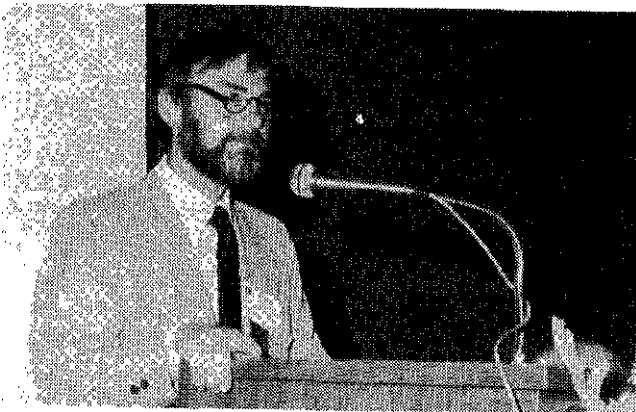
Alvin Kissler of Seattle gave the invocation.



Jean Roth, the Convention Chairman, welcomed us to the convention.



Madeline Wagner, local president, extended greetings from the Greater Seattle Area Chapter.



Rev. Donald **E.** Walter, minister of the United **Church** of Christ in Blaine, Washington conducted the memorial service.



Gary Walker from the Seattle Convention Bureau invited us to enjoy the beauty and hospitality of Seattle and the **Northwest**.

MEMORIES OF MY FATHER

Walter Weigum

From 1910 to 1913, my father, whose memories I am going to present to you, was the pastor of Norka, on the *Bergseite* of the Volga. His parish was very large, about 24,000 souls. Two distant colonies belonged to the Norka parish. But for some reason we had neither horses nor coach nor sled; a parish member had to drive my father on his pastoral rides. One of these drivers had the funny family name, *Teufel* ("devil"). Our maid, Madlena, used to answer when my father was out on such a ride and somebody came and wanted to see him, "*Der Teufel hat den Pastor geholt!*" ("The devil has picked up the pastor"). Our good Madlena Brehm—she loved me like her own child—emigrated to Wyoming or Idaho soon after we had moved to Switzerland. Maybe someone among you knows something about Madlena Brehm's later life?

My father, David Weigum, was born in Meschen (Ludwigstal), Crimea, in 1876. There he spent his childhood and part of his youth; the other years of his youth were spent at schools in Germany and at *Predigerschule* ("preacher's school") in Basel, Switzerland. In 1903 he married the Swiss girl Clara Pluess, my mother. From 1903 to 1913, my father was pastor of the German colonists' parishes Neuhoﬀnung, near Berdjansk on the Asov Sea; Neudorf, not far from Bendery, Bessarabia; and Norka. In 1913 we moved to Switzerland, and in 1918 we became Swiss citizens. From 1913 to 1937 my father was pastor of the small Reformed parish of Appenzel! in eastern Switzerland. In 1952 he died in Liestal, near Basel.

My father's father was Joseph Weigum, born in Kron(en)tal in 1850; my father's mother was Christine, nee Weidner, also from Kron(en)tal. My father's grandfather, Georg Michael Weigum was called "*Jerigmichel*" in Kron(en)tal. All, or almost all, of his nine children emigrated sooner or later to the United States and Canada. On the Weigum side alone my father had about fifty cousins in America. I do not know how many second cousins of mine are living in the United States and Canada!

My father had moved, in 1913, from an enormously large country into a very small one; he had left the wide plains of Russia for a mountain valley of Switzerland, and there he had a parish with hardly two percent of the souls he had had in Norka. He never felt really at home in Switzerland and he may have been homesick all the time. Because of this homesickness he must have begun writing about his childhood in 1917 or maybe even earlier. What he left when he died was a manuscript of about half the length of *Shukar Balan: The White Lamb* by Mela Meisner Lindsay.

I have selected, out of these remembrances, a few shorter passages. They do not speak of spectacular events, but of the simple daily life of our hard working ancestors and its equally simple joys. For the translation from German into English I thank Roswita Niessner of Hillsborough, California. And last but not least I thank Dr. Adam Giesinger and Mr. Timothy J. Kloberdanz for inviting me to present these memories to you.

Remembrances of my Father, David Weigum (1876-1952)

My parents' house, in which I was born, was the smallest of all the farmhouses in the village. Even a man of average height had to stoop in order not to bump his head. The threshold was so low that in times of heavy rain we had to dig ditches to divert the water from the door. If a sudden downpour occurred, water would run into the house,

The four walls were built of handmade adobe blocks. Adjacent to the building site, the earth was dug up in a circle twelve feet in diameter and about one foot deep. This was mixed into a dough with chaff or chopped straw as a binder. Horses were used to perform this task. On top of a crude table, fashioned from an old door, the dough was formed into blocks, twice as long as wide, and then dried in the sun on the ground. When the mixture was used up, another foot of earth was dug up in the circle, mixed with straw, and so on. The deeper the hole the better the blocks became, because the dirt turned into yellow clay. The pit remained in our yard for a long time and was used as a disposal place for ashes and other refuse.

It only took a few days for the blocks to dry and be ready for use. With these Father and Mother, possibly with the help of a hired man, had built our little house. The same clay mixture, somewhat thinned down, was used to smooth the walls inside and out. Then they were white-washed. I don't know whether the attic existed from the beginning; at any rate it was so low that one could work up there only in a stooped position or on one's knees. It was used to store grain for flour as well as for seed. The task of carrying it up and down the crude ladder was rather laborious. Rakes, pitchforks, and other hand tools were also stored up there. A thin wall divided the kitchen from the entrance. The kitchen stove was built of the same adobe

as the house, as were the stoves for the rooms on either side. These were fired from the kitchen side. One was built as an oven for baking. Since they were heated with straw, it created quite a mess in the kitchen every morning and evening. But we children loved it, and with pleasure we would stuff armfuls of straw into the fiery hole. When preparing meals that required longer cooking, mother would use a manure brick on top of the straw. The animal manure was not needed in the fields, since the black soil was very rich; it only needed moisture for the seeds to sprout and grow. Instead, the manure was piled up in the back of the yard. In the spring, it was spread out into a ten inch layer, the horses packed it with their hoofs, and then it was flattened with a roller or packer. When dry it was cut into blocks with a spade and piled up. In winter the pile was covered with straw and dirt to keep it dry.

As I mentioned before, our house had only two rooms, which we called *die Vorderstube* and *die Hinterstube*. Our parents slept in the front room, (as did guests whenever we had guests); they slept in the bed with the canopy and its gaily colored curtains. A chest of drawers stood between the two windows. Our better clothes were kept in this and the rest in a big wooden box. The chest and box, together with a sofa and a table, Mother had brought as her dowry. Some chairs, made by the local carpenter, were painted and decorated with flowers. A bench by the stove and a cuckoo clock from the Black Forest completed the inventory. Neither the front nor the back room had wooden floors or any other covering, just hardened ground. When it showed cracks, water was poured over it, then chaff, and we children had to run around on this until it was hard again. Often on a Saturday, when the women had time, the floor was "polished." A mixture of fresh cow manure and clay was rubbed on it with a cloth. For special holidays even the red, yellow, or blue edge was renewed. This was painted with water colors, which were also used to decorate the white walls with flowers by means of dipping a rag into the paint and dotting the wall. The back room was simpler yet. In this were the beds for the children and the maid, a table with a bench along the wall and a few chairs; that was all. This room was really our living room, and also used for our meals. It, and rarely ever the front room, was the place where one would sit with company on long winter nights, talk, smoke, eat, and drink until late into the night. Whenever we got tired, we children would crawl into our beds and under the covers. Nobody seemed to be concerned about the stuffy, smoky air. Summertime was much better for growing boys, because we could sleep outside in the oxcart, which had straw in it. During harvest time, we slept either on the freshly cut grain or on the straw right after it was thrashed. This felt so soft and comfortable and sun drenched, it was pure joy to sleep on it. We covered up with a quilt or a sheep skin. No matter how hot the days, the nights were usually cool. In the morning, the pillow and covers were wet with dew.

In the spring, as soon as the snow had melted and the ground thawed, work in the fields began with the sowing of summer wheat, barley, and oats. Everything was prepared: ploughs, yokes, harnesses. The last thing was the big water barrel. When it was hoisted on the wagon, that was the signal that everything was ready. The next morning, three pairs of oxen were put in front of each *Bugger* and a pair of horses in front to guide the oxen. The wagons with the water and the seed followed. That's how the teams looked when they emerged from all the farm yards and proceeded to the fields, each urged along by a driver wielding a whip of braided leather on a long stick. The animals cringed under the cruel whipping of the hired drivers, while the flies sucked the blood trickling down their backs. This is one of my saddest remembrances. The oxen were the martyrs of the steppes on whom every dull and rude man could vent his anger. When the owner was present, they held back with the beating. Very little seemed to show of the warm and compassionate nature of the Russian. Maybe this was his way of showing his displeasure with having to work. On top of this, the only food the animals got was the grass they could find in the fields, which was not very much. If it had been too dry for any grass to grow, they were fed with straw. No wonder the oxen were thin. Their work was hard. When, at noon, they were relieved of the harness, they were so tired that they first lay down to rest before they looked for food.

It was surprising that the German farmer, who liked to do things fast, could work with such slow animals as the oxen. Obviously, it was because of their contentedness, their strength, and their tolerating the cruel handling by the untrained Russian farmhands, who could never handle a temperamental horse. It is the ox which is worthy of a monument in every German village of the steppes. His strength alone was able to break and turn the virgin prairie soil from which then grew wheat, and with it prosperity and progress. Even in my time, there was still some virgin prairie land. To break it for the first time, it took eight oxen to pull the plough; their backs were bent, their horns nearly touching the ground. After the ploughing the harrow had to be pulled back and forth many times before the land was ready to seed.

On Monday morning, when it was time for laboring, we went out to the fields and stayed all week. There we cooked and slept. School was out until fall. As the plough turned row after row, we would find many birds' nests on the ground. If they had eggs in them, we got to keep them, since they would have

been ploughed under anyway. Nests with young birds were carefully moved to the ploughed area, so the parents could continue feeding their young until they could fly. There were cranes, geese, ducks, partridges, and many smaller birds. The geese, *Trappgaense*, are true birds of the steppes. As more and more land fell under the plough, they nearly disappeared. They migrated to areas of virgin prairie land to breed and raise their young. The crane stayed longer, because it was better able to adjust. The long-legged young were relatively easy to catch before they were able to fly. Many people tried to domesticate them. In a regal manner the birds would strut around the yard catching flies and bugs. The wings had to be clipped or they would take off and follow their wild brothers, if they saw or heard any. Seldom was it possible to keep them through the winter. Only one fanner managed to keep a pair for two or three years; then one died. The remaining bird was as faithful as a dog and followed his master everywhere. The farmer let his wings grow; when he had to go to another village, "Hans," the bird, would accompany him, flying in big circles above him, then wait patiently at the edge of the village, until his master was ready to return home.

Back to the fields. We children loved it when we were allowed to stay out over night. It is then that the steppes truly unfurl their magic. Much life goes to sleep, but just as much awakens, and a thousand secrets reveal themselves to the brightly twinkling stars. Work stopped at sunset. The animals, relieved of the burden of the harness, drank and then went to find grass. The men sat down around the fire, on which the simple meal had been cooked. Later they lay down side by side, smoking and enjoying their conversation. From time to time someone — whose ever turn it was — would take a heavy coat and go to look after the animals to prevent them from doing damage. If nothing had been planted or was growing yet, they would let the oxen run, but in the morning they sometimes had to go quite far to bring them back. We children sat among the men and listened to their stories until we could no longer keep our eyes open. Then we crawled under the blankets or sheep skins on hay or straw, or sometimes just under a wagon cover on the bare ground. Occasionally I was still awake long after the men had stopped talking and fallen asleep. A marvelous feeling would come over me in the solitude of the vast, seemingly unending steppes covered by a star-spangled canopy above. It was not total silence though. Thinking back it seems to me that I never again heard such majestic yet penetrating sounds as the chorus of thousands upon thousands of *Krixen* as we called the crickets. The night had lured them from every nook and cranny. Untiring they chirped and chirped until their melody streamed over the steppes like rushing ocean waves. Their song did not fade until the first rays of the red morning sun came up to call the sleepers to a new day's work. Once in a while one could hear the call of a night owl or the "gurlit, gurlit" of the woodcock. On such nights, more than any other time, one's heart and mind became one with the steppes, one's roots seemed to grow deeper, never to let go. Even years later, in a faraway land, when outer ties were severed through life's fate, an inner longing and homesickness would dwell deep down.

At the time of my earliest recollection, harvest time was quite different from what it was later when machines were used. Then one could still hear the quick pounding of the stone whetting the scythe. Row after row had to be cut down under the burning sun. Of course, father and his few hired men could only do part of the work. Shortly before harvest time, the *Kazappen*, who were Russians from the north, would come by the hundreds: men, women and young girls. They would gather at the railroad stations, the market places, or go from village to village. Their attire was quite different from ours. The men wore shirts and pants made from coarse linen. The shirts hung over the pants almost down to their knees; a colorful cord was tied around the waist. Their hair was long and cut straight, and was covered with a wide-brimmed straw hat, which they had braided themselves. Their shoes were made of the inner bark of the birch tree, and instead of socks they wrapped bandage like strips of linen around their legs, held together with string. The women wore short wool skirts, undyed, either grey or brown, whatever had been the color of the sheep. Their blouses were embroidered in bright colors, and over these they often wore a quilted jacket; and on their heads a gaily colored kerchief. Each person had a heavy coat, their only protection against adverse weather, day or night. When the women didn't go barefoot, they wore strong, high leather boots. Whatever else they needed, be it clothing or food, was carried on their backs in a small denim sack. The men also carried their harvesting tools on their shoulders,, a scythe and a rake, neatly tied together. They walked in groups according to their home towns, asking to be hired. Their poverty at home must have been great. Often they walked hundreds of miles before they could even catch a train going south. The pay they received for their hard work was minimal, about three rubles for two acres. They cooked their own meals, for which they received bread, flour, potatoes, millet for *Kasha*, onions, garlic, some dried fish, and very seldom any meat. They also received milk and a little barrel with water. They were shown the fields, and their rations were periodically replenished. They took care of themselves until the work was finished. Day and night, they stayed out in the fields; only a steady rain would bring them to the

village, but this seldom happened. We were awed by the industriousness, the tenacity and the simplicity of the Kazappen, those true nature-people one does not forget.

As slow and untrained as the Russian servants were at first, they soon became capable and indispensable workers, who, without question, contributed to the prosperity of the German farmer. For the most part they were rather undemanding. For weeks, even months, during harvest and thrashing season, they would work with almost super-human strength with only three to four hours of sleep. Still they remained happy and content. After dinner, when everyone else was allowed to rest, they had to pile up the straw until late at night. Not an easy task. Instead of complaining they softly sang their melancholic folksongs. When finally all the work was done, they rewarded themselves with a homemade cigarette, rolling their beloved machorka, the tobacco of the Russian peasant, in some cheap writing-paper. After this treat, each would reach for his coat, its rough material spun and woven by dear old Mother at home, wrap himself up and stretch out on the nearest pile of straw, to sleep his short but very deep sleep. Before the sun rose, they were already on their way out to the fields. A bag with bread and pickles, and maybe a watermelon, was dangling from the side of the wagon. No hot meal until they returned at night. Then there would be Pribs — that is a coffee made from roasted grains — bread, butter, cheese, and smoked ham. Before they sat down, each took a mouthful of water to wash his face and another mouthful to wash hands. To make the sign of the cross before and after each meal was something they never forgot to do. In those days, they were not very choosy about their food. Quantity was more important than quality. Surely, some farmers took advantage of their simplemindedness. Generally, however, the Russian servant was treated well by the German fanner. A very special treat from the landlord was a little glass of Schnaps. Its soothing and conciliatory qualities were not to be underestimated. With a serious face and hat in hand the Russian made the sign of the cross, took the glass saying, "Na vorovia, Khosain" or "To your health, master," and poured it down. These people were as healthy as can be. I have a hard time trying to remember one of them ever being sick; only stomach aches were frequent. Whether the cause was overeating or rather to get an extra ration of Schnaps was not always clear. At any rate» a stomach ache was the surest way of getting a little drink. It was an inexpensive and wonderfully quick reacting medicine. A healthy dose of black pepper had to be added in order to increase the effect. Occasionally a man may have just feigned a stomach ache for the sake of getting a minute rest from this hard work.

As the years went by, more and more of the virgin steppe soil was cultivated. What little was left was the perfect place to grow watermelon and cantaloupe. These were quite important to every household. The watermelon seemed adapted to the steppes. It needs little rain yet stores up a lot of water for the thirst. Therefore, it was always welcome and one never grew tired of it. They also were a boon to the housewife, for they often made up half of a meal, and also served as snacks in between. For the winter a syrup was cooked from the juice. This was especially good when poured into a dish and fresh bread dunked into it, accompanied by a cup of Pribs. The melon fields were special and therefore carefully guarded by a Bash-tanshik, the watchman of a bashtan (Tatar word for this kind of field). He had a real gun and lived in a little straw hut in the middle of the field. I can hardly picture life on the steppes without these fields and those thousands of dark or light green balls shimmering in the glistening sun. Sometimes passing workmen could not resist the temptation to quickly step over and pick one. A sharp blow with the fist would break it, a tonic for the parched throat. Surely the watchman knew such thirst and may have turned the other way. Besides, the thirst was often greater than the fear of a load of salt in the behind. Usually the watchman was an old man anyway, who could pop and crack but seldom hit. Often the watchman was a Nicholayevskye, which meant that he had served twelve or more years a soldier in the army of Zarvaeterchen Nicholas I. Now old and grey, still wearing the faded soldier's cap and torn coat, he roamed the land, supporting his meager existence through begging or guarding melon fields or vineyards for little pay. He either cooked his own meals or the farmers took turns feeding him. When a little machorka was added to his supplies, he had everything he needed. So he lived until one day, somewhere far away from home, he would breathe his last breath, his eyes fixed on the saint in a little picture he had carried with him together with his army discharge papers. This picture, stuck into the straw wall of his hut, had been his altar, where every morning and night he would make the sign of the cross, as his mother once had taught him, according to the ordinances of the orthodox church. Simple, unassuming, yet longing for companionship, this showed in his childlike joy when one would bring him a little bottle of Schnaps or he could take some tobacco out of Father's pouch to roll a cigarette. When Father would take time to sit down with him in front of his hut, and let him talk about his life's experiences, tears would sometimes roll down his haggard face into his beard. Once more, he relived his years as a soldier, the sweltering heat by Sevastopol, the bloody battle over the Malakov Kurgan in 1854, or later when under the Tsar's flag he marched toward Constantinople to fight the hated Turk.

From time to time, bands of Gypsies would descend on our village. They were a great attraction for us children. No sooner had those ragged looking horses and wagons arrived at their usual camping ground just outside the village, when women and children fanned out into all directions: absolutely ugly old women, astonishingly beautiful young women, and filthy dirty kids. Since, for the most part, they made their living by begging and stealing, they were not exactly welcome. Their first battle was always with the dogs of the fanners. These dogs never had very friendly dispositions, and certainly not towards these strangers. That, however, did not deter the Gypsies. It took them several minutes though before they reached the house. Their personalities were as tough as their brown skin. Their already torn clothes were often made even worse by the dogs. Some people, I think, even provoked the dogs to run after those poor souls. Father or Mother never did, but I don't dare to vouch for us boys. At any rate, when they had managed to get to the house, the little troop sat down on the floor in the hall by the front door, each with his two little bags over his shoulder, one in front and one in the back. They didn't really need to say anything. Mother knew what they wanted, and she would give them what she had handy: a plate full of flour, a piece of bread, or potatoes, or meat. But she did not dare leave them out of sight or something might be missing after they were gone. Only "Hannebas" and her little tribe could be trusted. They had been coming for years and had established somewhat of a relationship. The type of gift would determine into which sack it would go, i.e. flour into one, everything else into the other. This must have been quite a mess after a while. But the Gypsies did not care as long as it was edible. They even picked up carcasses of animals they found, and ate them, completely unconcerned. While begging they were seldom satisfied with just one thing; they kept asking for more. Sometimes mother really had trouble getting rid of them. It wasn't for the lack of words, for she knew a few words in the Russian and the Tatar languages. The Gypsies even understood some German, but mother was too soft and kind-hearted, and that made absolutely no impression on her "visitors." So she was relieved when Father or a man-servant happened to come home, then these little pests left in a hurry. Only their odor stayed around for hours.

The Gypsy women, young and old, smoked long pipes and were as a rule "fortune tellers," offering their skill as they made the rounds. I am sure Mother never let them read her palm; that was not fitting for a believing Christian. But the maids were quick to take a glimpse into their future for a little coin or maybe in return for what Mother had given. They were also known to practice "Black Magic." True or not, many women were so superstitious that any mishap in the house or with the animals was blamed on the Gypsies. So as not to draw their vengeance upon themselves, they often were more than willing to satisfy the beggars' wishes. While the women secured the supplies, the men unloaded the wagons and set up their smoke-blackened tents. If they planned to stay a while, they also set up their primitive blacksmith in front of the tents, with anvil and bellows right on the ground. They worked sitting down. It was quite exciting for us to watch them work, making the sparks fly low over the ground. Being so different from our farmers, even the man himself was fascinating with his shaggy black hair and beard, the fiery wild eyes in the reddish-brown face, and his dazzling white teeth. In the summer it was a merry life, but in the winter, when the storms raged over the steppes, and tore on the tents, it must have been bitter cold inside. Snow was welcome, for it covered the tent and provided a certain warmth and protection from the wind. All life was confined to the tents, including the skinny little horses and the few chickens they had caught somewhere. Not too often though did our village serve them as winter quarters. They usually stayed only through the summer.

Most of the men were rather skillful blacksmiths. They made little coal shovels, tongs, axes, and a few other items, which they tried to sell in the village. At the same time, they would pick up things that needed repair. They sparked our interest by making finger rings for us. We would bring them some old coins, and they fashioned rings out of them for a few pennies or some other tradable item. From the women we bartered Zagez or whatever its name was. It was their form of chewing gum, probably some kind of tree sap. This they seemed to chew constantly to keep their teeth white. Indeed, all of them had the most beautiful white teeth. And, because the teeth were good, the whole person was healthy. In fact, I do not recall many dental problems among our own people. If a tooth really pained, it was removed quickly and efficiently without the benefit of a dentist, only with a piece of strong thread and a door suddenly slammed shut.

Editor's Note: Only the tenth part of his father's recollections was presented by Professor Weigum during his convention address. Within the near future the Society hopes to make available to its members a translation of the entire text of Pastor David Weigum's manuscript.

Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte

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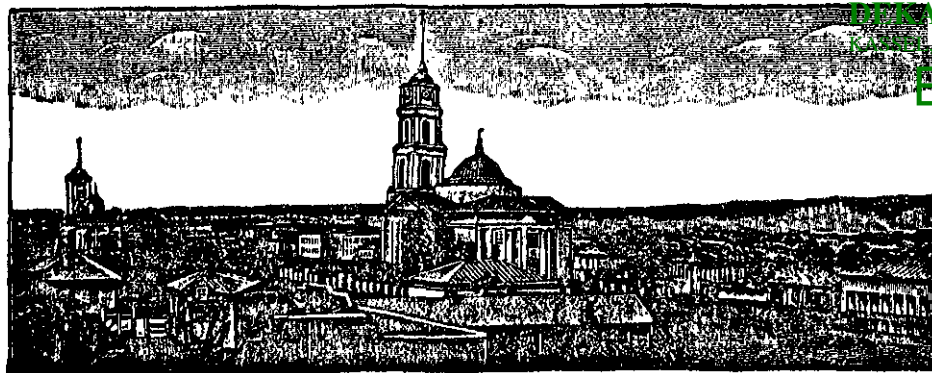
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The Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte with a picture of Katharinenstadt. Readers will note the name of Dekan A. Schwab on the cover. It was he who saved these copies and donated them to the Institut fur Auslandsbeziehungen (Institute for Foreign Relations) in Stuttgart.

VOLGA GERMANS AS PICTURED IN THE *WOLGADEUTSCHE MONATSHEFTE*

Emma Schwabenland Haynes

The *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte*, which I shall discuss in this paper, was started by Volga German refugees who had fled to Germany to escape the Communist Revolution and the terrible famine of 1921-1922. They formed an organization called "*Verein der Wolgadeutschen*" which published the paper from July 1922 through February 1925. At that time the beginning of a world wide depression was making itself felt, and the editors did not get enough subscribers to stay in business. Neither the Library of Congress nor the New York Public Library has copies of the magazine, but I was able to Xerox the issues while I lived in Germany and will send them to our archives in Greeley after this convention is over.

The *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* contains fascinating accounts of conditions in Russia during the early 1920's, as well as stories of the history and culture of the Volga Germans. The magazine faced many financial difficulties during the three years of its existence. When the paper started, a quarterly subscription cost fifty cents in North America, one and a half pesos in Argentina, and eighteen marks in Germany. **But** this was a period of rampant inflation in Germany and six months later, the price had risen to sixty marks. By May 1923 it sold for 1,000 marks, and by August for 9,000 marks. In September a single issue cost 150,000 marks and in October, 4,500,000 marks. Then the government repudiated all internal debts and created a new system of money so that in November 1923 the paper sold for forty-five pfennigs on a quarterly basis.

The main purpose of the magazine was to keep Volga Germans throughout the entire world in touch with one another. In 1921, as a result of the Civil War with its constant requisitions of food, all storehouses stood empty. Then came a bad drought, and since there were no reserves on hand, famine set in. People ate anything they could find: cats, dogs, horses. They mixed grain with chaff or weeds to bake bread, and those who had no grain, made unappetizing concoctions of weeds, *treebark*, and even clay. Deaths from starvation were so frequent that village clerks could no longer keep records. Many inhabitants of the Volga left their homes for the Ukraine or the Caucasus in a desperate attempt to find something to eat. Others traveled to Minsk on the Polish border or the *Plotzk* which lay near Lithuania, from where they hoped to cross into Germany and eventually reach America. A Red Cross report printed in the *Monatshefte* for October 1922, tells that during the winter of 1921, thirty to fifty percent of all the refugees in Plotzk had died either of typhus or of dysentery. Approximately 513 were still in the camp but they were unable to leave for Germany because the Polish border was closed. An equal number were working for Polish farmers in the neighborhood, and about 500 inhabitants of the camp had already gone back to their former homes on the Volga.

In the August 1922 issue is a report of a German girl who left the Volga with her family on December 6, 1921. It took them nearly a month to cross Russia to the Polish border. There were many delays, some as long as seven days, while the family waited in railroad stations for a train. During all of this time, they never had a chance to wash properly and it was necessary to wage a constant battle against lice. They crossed into Poland illegally on foot, and were eventually put into an *unheated* cattle train with ice on the floor of the wagon. At long last they reached a refugee camp at *Stralkovo* outside of Warsaw. Here they were *deloused*, and since many of them were ill with typhus, the most sick were put into a so-called hospital where they slept on straw sacks which were also covered with ice. Some patients suffered from frozen feet and had to have their toes amputated. Food was extremely scarce, but finally the German Red Cross and Germans living in Poland came to their help. Eventually, they were able to enter Germany,

One of the first tasks of the *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* was to print the names of the refugees, so that people in the New World who were related to them, could come to their aid. Thus the issue for October, 1922 contains a list of persons who were already in Germany, as well as those who were waiting in the camps in Minsk and Plotzk. Heinrich *Kindsvater* of *Dittcl*, *Wilhelm Borger* from *Warenburg*, Christina *Steitz* from *Straub*, and *Johannes Weingardt* from *Rothammel* were among those residing in Minsk. When no replies were forthcoming, columns were printed with the heading "*Gesucht wird*" (looking for). In the October 1923 issue. Jacob *Rehm*, who was currently in a camp in Frankfurt on the Oder river in Germany, was seeking; a Mr. Heinrich *Zilch* in Walla Walla, Washington, and *Klemens Hertel* of *Obermonjou* asks if anyone knows the address of his cousin, *Alexander Brchm*, who is in the United States.

December 10, 1922 was a memorable day for many Volga Germans. On that night trains arrived in Frankfurt on the Oder bringing one thousand refugees from Minsk. The German Red Cross had signed an agreement with Polish authorities allowing the refugees direct transit across Poland. Among them were many

orphaned children whose parents had died after leaving the Volga. Pastor [von Bodelschwingh](#), who was famous in Germany for his philanthropic work, came to Frankfurt and took these orphans with him to his institution at Bethel near Bielefeld. The remaining refugees were put into quarantine for five weeks because typhus had broken out among them. A Dr. [Rothermal](#), who was himself a Volga German, took care of the sick people while they were in this camp!¹

Even before the *Monatshefte* began publication, the [Verein der Wolgadeutschen](#) sent two ministers to North America to raise money for famine sufferers. The first was Rev. P. A. [Schneider](#), who worked particularly in Canada, and the second was Rev. [Johannes Schleuning](#) who had been born in the colony of [Neu Norka](#). Rev. Schleuning arrived in New York on October 6, 1921 and left immediately for Lincoln, Nebraska, where he knew that many Volga Germans lived. His idea was to collect money which would be sent to Germany for distribution by the German Red Cross. However, much to his surprise, he learned that relief societies had already been formed both in Portland, Oregon and in Lincoln, Nebraska; that nearly \$100,000.00 had been raised by the two organizations, and that a representative of the Portland society, Mr. George Repp, was at that very moment in Saratov, working under the auspices of the American Relief Administration. He also discovered that various church groups, such as the National Lutheran Council, the Central Committee of the [Mennonite Church](#), and the Baptist Church had all signed agreements to work with the [ARA](#) in helping people of their own religious faith in Russia.

Perhaps I should point out that although conditions were particularly severe along the Volga, all of European Russia was affected by the famine. The fundamental rule of the American Relief Administration was to give aid to those who needed it, without regard to race, religion, or politics. Consequently, child feeding stations were set up throughout most of European Russia. In all, about \$61,000,000.00 was distributed to famine sufferers.² The speed with which the United States responds to any plea for help in a natural disaster, is something which should make us very proud of our country.

Rev. Schleuning remained in America for over a year. During this time he sent frequent reports to Germany for publication in the *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte*.³ After leaving Lincoln, he went to [Otis](#), Kansas, from where he visited Mennonite settlements in that state. Next he continued to Denver, Colorado; [Fresno](#), California; Portland, Oregon; and the state of Washington. Then to [Lodi](#), California and back east to Chicago and various places in Wisconsin. He spent the last two months in the [Dakotas](#) where he worked with the Iowa Synod of the Lutheran Church and where the money collected was sent to Berlin for distribution among the Black Sea Germans. On November 4, 1922 he returned to Nebraska to attend a meeting in which the relief societies in Portland and in Lincoln combined to form the American Volga Relief Society. Dr. [H. P. Wekesser](#), a very capable man, was elected president of the consolidated group. He must have been one of the very first Volga Germans to obtain a degree in medicine before 1920.⁴

But the Catholics of America should not be forgotten either. On January 15, 1922, Joseph [Aloysius Kessler](#), the last German Catholic bishop of Russia, arrived in the United States accompanied by [Rektor Nikolaus Maier](#), a representative of the Verein der Wolgadeutschen, to collect money for Catholic Volga Germans. After a brief stop in Chicago, they went on to Hays, Kansas, where hundreds of Volga Germans met them at the railroad station and brought them in a flower-bedecked automobile to the parsonage. The next Sunday morning a relief society was formed. Enthusiasm ran high. All of the surrounding villages in which Catholic Russian German people lived, wanted Bishop Kessler to visit them. On one day he received fifty-two invitations. The two men stayed in Hays twenty-six days and visited twenty-three churches. Then they went to [Topeka](#) and finally to the Dakotas. Everywhere people showed amazing generosity. Some of them even borrowed money from banks so that they could contribute to famine re-lief.⁵

It must be remembered that these events occurred fifty-seven years ago when most Volga Germans in America had parents, brothers, and sisters still living in Russia, Bishop Kessler had left Russia for Bessarabia in 1920. Consequently, he could give first hand information on the tragic events of the Communist Revolution. In the same way, Rev. Schleuning told of evening meetings in America which lasted quite late and then people would still gather with him in private homes and continue asking questions until long after midnight. Everyone wanted to know how his own family had fared during these disastrous years.

The *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* also contains accounts of conditions back in the German colonies. A man named [Hans Hess](#) wrote two articles on "[Ein Autofahrt durch die Wolgakolonien](#)" in which he describes the [Wiesenseite](#) villages. He says that in most places no schools were held between 1918-1922. The school buildings were often in a state of collapse with windows and doors missing. And everywhere there were empty houses which had been allowed to fall into ruin. Taxes were unbearably high, and all wealthy

people had either been shot or had had their property taken away. The village of Kano was particularly hard hit. Mr. Hess describes how he entered the house of a young widow who was seriously ill and whose four sick children, dressed in rags, were lying on straw. There was no bread, no clothing, nor any fuel with which to heat the sod house in which they were living.⁶

Another frequent contributor to the *Monatshefte* was Dr. Otto Fischer, who had worked with the German Red Cross in the Saratov area. Between November 1922 and October 1923 he wrote eight very scholarly articles on such subjects as "Present Day Conditions in the Volga colonies" (December 1922), "Epidemics and then- Prevention" (March 1923), "Taxes in the Volga Colonies" (September and October 1923), and "The Significance of Malaria" (April 1923).

The problem of malaria became of increasing importance in 1923. Starting with the July issue, the *Wolga-deutsche Monatshefte* ran ads appealing to Americans for just a "Scherflein" (a small amount of money) to furnish quinine through the Malaria Fund of the Verein der Wolgadeutschen.

At the same time, appeals were made for money with which to buy cattle for the German colonies. At first it was thought that farmers in America could donate from their own possessions, and, while Rev. Schneider was in Manitoba, he had collected the beginning of a herd destined for the Volga colonies.⁷ But it soon developed that it would cost more to ship these cows from Canada to Russia than they were worth, so it was decided to sell them and send the money to the Volga for the purchase of new cattle. An ad was placed in the July 1923 issue saying that fifty dollars would buy a cow and Americans were urged to send money for this purpose in dollars, not marks- Later, after help began coming from South America, appeals would read, "Send dollars and pesos."

In addition, almost every issue contained letters from Russia describing events in the villages and expressing thanks to the German Red Cross and the Verein der Wolgadeutschen for help which they had received. There were also letters from Germany, North America, and South America, so that the magazine did give a picture of Volga Germans throughout the world.

The *Monatshefte* had a second purpose: to portray the historical and cultural history of the Volga Germans. There were many articles describing the colonization period of the 1760's. For example, in the issues for November and December 1924 one can read four documents which had belonged to Daniel Heymann, who had departed for Russia in 1766. Legally, one could go to Russia only by obtaining a paper certifying that one was not a serf and had left behind no unpaid bills. To counteract this rule, many people departed secretly in the middle of the night, but Daniel Heymann did obtain a certificate saying that he was a member of the village of Mandemach, in the principality of Dillenburg (now part of Hesse) and was free of the jurisdiction of the house of Orange Nassau to which he had belonged. It was signed on July 17, 1766 and cost Heymann four florins.

The second document was a flyer describing the Volga area around Saratov. The climate was said to resemble that of southern France; the rivers were full of fish; the land was so fertile that every kind of grain, as well as cotton and rice, would grow. And in the springtime the fields were covered with hyacinths, many colored tulips, and sweet smelling herbs. Needless to say, the advertisement was a mixture of truth and falsehood.

Daniel Heymann chose to sign up with Baron Caneau de Beauregard, a private director who had arranged to bring colonists to Russia. Document three consists of promises made by Beauregard to Heymann, and document four of Heymann's promises to his director.

These four papers were kept by Daniel Heymann during his lifetime. After his death they were passed down through the generations, until some unknown person carried copies back to Germany and allowed the *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* to publish them in 1924.

In another of the *Monatshefte* we are given the biography of Rev. Johannes Kufeld who was born in the colony of Schwed on the Wiesenseite of the Volga.⁸ He decided to become a minister at a time when hardly any native-born sons went to get a higher education. After graduating from the Lutheran Seminary at Dorpat in modern Estonia, he spent brief periods in Grimm and Saratov, and then became pastor in Rein-hard, east of Saratov, where he remained from 1897-1908.

Rev. Kufeld had always been interested in the early history of the Volga Germans, and during these years, he searched people's homes for any memoirs telling about the long trek to Russia. He then had such memoirs printed in the magazine *Friedensbote* for 1900 and 1901. (Five of these memoirs have been translated by Dr. Adam Giesinger in our *Work Papers and Journal*.) It was probably at this time that Rev. Kufeld got the idea of writing a history of the Volga colonists which he hoped to have published in time for

the 150th Anniversary of their arrival in Russia, but the outbreak of World War I made these plans impossible.

By 1911 Rev. Kufeld had become pastor of the Lutheran Church in the Ukrainian city of Nikolayev. It was here that he lived through the trying years of World War I and the Communist Revolution. At one point he was also arrested and spent some time in prison. His health suffered from the various tribulations to which he was subjected, and he died on November 17, 1919 while he was preparing to conduct a Sunday morning church service.

His widow with two sons left for Germany shortly thereafter. After the *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* was started, she gave the manuscript of Kufeld's book to the editor to be printed. But, as he explained in the issue of November 1922, it would cost at current prices between one and one-half to two million marks to publish it. As a substitute, he printed chapters four through six which deal with the personalities and activities of the recruiters of Catherine the Great. The manuscript still exists today, but has never been published.⁹

In October 1923 there appeared another very interesting article entitled "Russian German Family History taken from the *Grundbuch* (Foundation Book) of Katharinenstadt in 1776." This material had been prepared by Pastor G. H. Keller, the Protestant minister of that city. According to him, 715 people originally settled in Katharinenstadt. Of these, 415 were Lutheran; 202, Catholic; and 98, Reformed.

The countries of western Europe from where these people came were: Germany, 632; Holland, 63; Prance, 17; Austria, 16; Switzerland, 7; and the remaining 11 people came from various other countries. Their occupations were listed as farmers, bakers, millers, tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, a wig maker, a goldsmith, officers, etc. If Katharinenstadt is typical of other Volga German communities, it is easy to understand why the newly arrived immigrants had so much difficulty with farming during the early years on the Volga.

Then came some information which I found very sad. Mr. Reimesch, the editor of the *Monatshefte*, printed a list of family names which could be found in Katharinenstadt and added that if any of his readers wished to find out from where in western Europe these people had come, they could obtain the information by writing to him. It seems such a shame that he didn't print their place of origin immediately, but evidently he thought that few of his readers cared about genealogy.

One person who was interested in the places from where Volga Germans had come was Father Gottlieb Beratz, the author of *Die Deutschen an der unteren Wolga*, which is the first well-documented history of the Volga colonies. Father Beratz was born in Gobel, a Catholic village on the western side of the Volga and served as priest in Dehler and Herzog. Throughout his lifetime he did research on the Volga Germans, interviewing older people, collecting memoirs, and looking in all possible archives, including those of Germany. His book was ready for publication in 1915, but because a few sentences expressed criticism of the Russian government, it was not allowed to be sold until after the war was over.

While Father Beratz was still in Dehler, he discovered immigration lists of Volga Germans which had been kept in Kamyschin. He copied these by hand, and during World War I began working on them with the idea of printing all lists of Catholic immigrants, along with a short history of the villages which they founded. This was a very tedious, difficult job, and when the revolution broke out, he had finished only half of the names. In 1921 he was accused of participating in a revolt against the communists which took place in the early spring of that year. He was arrested and condemned to death, but he appealed to higher authorities and was set free. However, he was almost immediately arrested again and was shot on April 15, 1921. At the time of his death, most of his valuable written material was destroyed. Only a small part was rescued and put into a museum in Katharinenstadt. Nobody seems to know where it is today.¹⁰

The *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* also printed many articles on the folklore of Germans on the Volga. In the November 1922 issue there is a report by Peter Sinner of the University of Saratov on "The Relation of the Volga Colonist to Nature." In it Peter Sinner tells how helpless a Volga German farmer feels when he is exposed to the mercy of the elements and the weather. Just like a child, he attempts to foretell the future by various signs in the heavens. Many of these are in the form of proverbs, such as:

Ein nasser April und ein kuehler Mai
Bringt Frucht und Hai (Heu).

A wet April and a cool May
Bring wheat and hay.

Sinner gives about fifty of these sayings. The croaking of toads signifies rain, and if it rains on the day when a new moon appears in the sky, it will rain all month.

The *Monatshefte* also has articles by J. Toepfer on "Engagement and Marriage Customs in the Volga Area."¹¹ And in other issues there are reports by J. Zorn who describes life on the steppe during the plowing and harvesting period, when whole villages would camp out during the week. The building of temporary shelters, the gathering of fuel for the fires, the food prepared, and the games of the young boys are all lovingly portrayed.¹²

Then in the June 1923 number, Dr. Georg Schuenemann, who was director of a school of music near Berlin, tells how he visited a prisoner of war camp for Russian soldiers in 1917. In the midst of all the clamor of the camp, he thought he could hear German songs, and coming closer he found Volga German colonists sitting on the ground and singing old familiar melodies. The unusual tone qualities of these songs made him want to collect them, so he sent a form letter to all camps, asking German prisoners of war from Russia to write down the songs which they knew and to tell from what section of Russia they came. Then he went to these camps and thus managed to gather over 400 of them. In many cases he used primitive sound equipment from Edison to record the melodies. His book was printed in 1923 under the title, *Das Lied der deutschen Kolonisten in Russland*. It is still the most valuable collection of Russian German songs with melodies which has ever been printed.

Other books also appeared during these three years. Dr. Karl Stumpp's doctoral thesis, *Die deutschen Kolonien im Schwarzmeergebiet* is reviewed in the April 1923 issue, and Rev. John Stenzel, who was related to people named Stenzel in Windsor, Colorado, wrote his *Lebenserinnerungen* or Memoirs, which are mentioned in February 1924.

Another issue tells of the ordination of Rev. Jakob Riffel, who was born in Blumenfeld in 1893, the son of the local "Schulmeister." He came to Germany after the war, studied theology, and was ordained in Dresden. Then he accepted a position offered by the Verein der Wolgadeutschen to go to Argentina and work among the Volga German people there.¹³ Rev. Riffel decided to stay in Argentina, and in 1928 wrote an outstanding account of the Volga Germans in that country.

The November 1923 issue carried an announcement of the marriage of Rev. Jakob Eichhorn and Elisabeth Strauch of Beideck on September 30, 1923 in the home of Rev. August Schwab. I was very interested in this notice because Rev. Eichhorn, who now lives in Saginaw, Michigan, is a loyal member of AHSGR and did much to help Fred Koch -write his valuable book on the Volga Germans. Rev. Schwab, at whose house the wedding took place, gave us the first books with which we started our Greeley, Colorado archives.

In this brief paper, I have been able to merely touch upon a few of the fascinating and historically valuable articles in the *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte*. It's a fine magazine, and will always remain a primary source of information on the Volga Germans for both scholars and laymen.¹⁴

NOTES

1. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), January 1923, pp. 12-13.
2. H. H. Fisher, *The Famine in Soviet Russia 1919-1923: The Operations of the American Relief Administration* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 553. The total amount of money administered by the American Relief Administration in Russia was \$61,566,231.53. The largest donation was \$18,662,180.00 which was appropriated by the American Congress for corn and seed grain.
3. Reports from Rev. Schleuning can be found in:
Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte (Berlin), July 1922, pp. 10-11. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), July 1923, pp. 186-188. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), August 1923, pp. 213-214.
4. Dr. H. P. Wekesser, who had led the work in Lincoln from the very start, unfortunately died only six weeks after he was elected president of the combined American Relief Society. The vice-president of the organization, Mr. John Rohrig of Lincoln, then took over. Rev. Schleuning paid tribute to Dr. H. P. Wekesser in a eulogy printed on page 44 of the February 1923 *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte*.
5. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), August 1923, p. 214.
6. Hans Hess, "Eine Autofahrt durch die Wolgakolonien," *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), January 1923, pp. 13-15 and February 1923, pp. 47-51.
7. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), January 1923, p. 2. In all, 32 cows, 1 horse, 1 pig, 10 chickens, and the money from three acres of wheat were collected from the Christ Church of the Ohio Synod in Waldersee, Manitoba, Canada.
8. K. Kramer, "Pastor Johannes Kufeld zum Gedachtnis," *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), October 1922, p. 82.
9. In 1924 the widow of Rev. Kufeld married Peter Brack, a Volga German American who had arrived in the United States on October 24, 1876 and had settled in Kansas where he became quite wealthy. His wife died in 1918 and six years later, on a trip to Germany, Peter met Mrs. Kufeld and they were married. He brought her, along with two sons, to his home

in Great Bend, Kansas. One of the sons, who adopted the name of Brack, became the senior vice president of **Braniff** International Airlines.

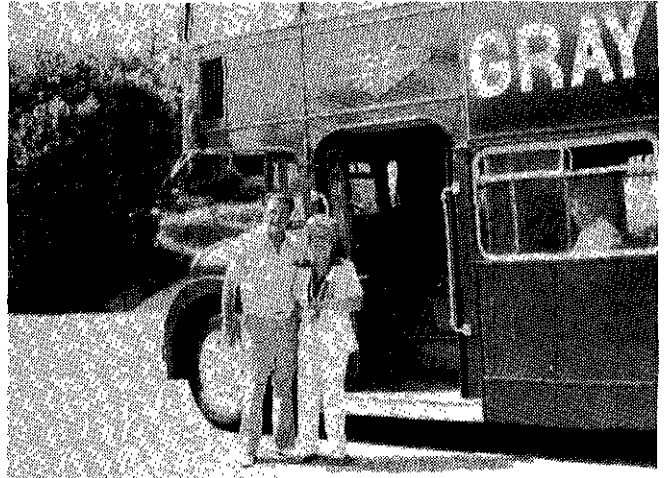
10. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), April 1923, pp. 98-100. Father **Beratz** also planned to write a second volume on the history of the Volga Germans and had collected much material for it. His brutal death was an irreplaceable loss for all Volga Germans.
11. **J. Toepfer**, "Verlobungs - und Hochzeitssitten im Wolgagebiet," *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), April 1924, pp. 84-85 and May 1924, pp. 110-112.
12. **J. Zorn**, "Draussen 'uf die Steppe," " *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), June 1924, pp. 132-133 and July 1924, pp. 146-148.
13. *Wolgadeutsche Monatshefte* (Berlin), November 1923, p. 306.
14. In addition to the articles on the Volga Germans, *the Monatshefte* also contain many reports on the Black Sea Germans, the **Volhynian** Germans, the **Mennonites**, and Germans in the Caucasus.

MEET OUR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Many of the pictures in this issue were taken by members who have photography as one of their hobbies.



Photographer **Alexander Dupper** prepared an unusual exhibit of photographs of Catherine II for the **Lodi** Chapter booth for chapter night.



Picture taker **Alvin Kissler** posed with his **frau**, June, before boarding this bus as guide on a tour that took non-Russian German spouses to their home for a social hour.



At far left is **Kermit B. Karns** who was never without his camera. In this picture he does the posing with his **wife** and friends.



Seating was by ancestral village at the Fellowship Breakfast. **Clarence R. Krieger**, who furnished us with some excellent "shots" is in the foreground with his wife. The **Norka** table was their choice.

THE BLACK SEA GERMANS IN 1941

Adam Giesinger

From 1787 to 1842 some 9,000 German families, about 50,000 people, migrated to the Black Sea region in southern Russia. They founded 200 German villages scattered over the vast territory stretching from the *Prut* river in the west to the South Caucasus in the east. The most westerly of these villages were in south central Bessarabia. To the east of them, across the Dniester river, were the four enclaves lying between the Dniester and the Bug, commonly called the Odessa colonies: the *Liebental*, *Kutschurgan*, *Glickstal*, and *Beresan* villages. Eastward again, lying along the Dnieper river, from south to north, were the so-called Swedish colonies near *Berislav*, the *Chortitza Mennonites* at the northward bend of the Dnieper, and then *Jamburg*, *Josephstal*, and *Rybalsk* near the present Dnepropetrovsk. Far to the south of these, there were a few German villages in the Simferopol and *Feodosia* districts of the Crimean peninsula. Northeast of them, along the north coast of the Sea of Azov, starting in the west, were the *Prischib* villages, the *Molotschna* Mennonites, the Berdyansk *Swabians*, and then the *Grunau* villages northwest of *Mariupol*. Finally, far to the southeast, across the Caucasus mountains, on the east side of the Black Sea, near *Tiflis* and beyond it, were the German villages of the South Caucasus.

By the 1860's the population of these so-called mother colonies had tripled and there began a vast expansion into daughter colonies on bought and rented land all over southern Russia: near the mother colonies, then into the northern Crimea, into the *Donetz-Don* region and into the North Caucasus. Soon thereafter, in the 1870's, there began the emigration to the *Americas*, which continued on a substantial scale till 1914. In the 1890's German settlers from the Black Sea also began to move eastward into Siberia. In spite of these migrations the German Black Sea population continued to increase: in 1897 it was 377,000; by 1914 it was over 500,000. Generally, at that time, the Black Sea Germans were a prosperous people, more advanced than their Russian neighbors in agriculture, industry, and education.

Starting in 1914, there came a succession of blows: the anti-German legislation during the war, the terrors of the revolution and the civil war, the disastrous famine of the 1920's, and finally the *Stalinist* terror of the 1930's. These devastated the material and human resources of the German villages, lowered their morale to its lowest point in their history, and made them the poorest of the poor. Then, in 1941, there came the Nazi-Soviet war, which was to bring the complete liquidation of the German Black Sea colonies.

We have two sets of documents which describe the state in which the invading Nazi armies found the Black Sea Germans in 1941:

1. Ten-page *Dorfberichte* ("Village Reports") for eighty-one villages, seventy-four of them lying between the Bug and Dnieper rivers, the other seven just east of the Dnieper near Dnepropetrovsk.

These reports were prepared in 1942 under the auspices of the Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories by a group working under the leadership of Dr. *Karl Stumpp*. We have them on a microfilm obtained from the Library of Congress. I prepared a key for this microfilm two years ago and spoke about the contents at our 1977 convention at San Francisco.¹

2. Two-page *Dorfkarten* for 320 villages, about 200 of them in the Odessa region and the rest east of the Dnieper, in the region north of the Sea of Azov.

These were prepared by *SS-officers* in the late months of 1941 for the Odessa colonies and in the early months of 1942 for the eastern colonies. Photocopies of them were obtained for us from the originals in the German Federal Archives, Koblenz, by Dr. Peter *Klassen* of *Fresno*, California.

In addition to these we have reports on the condition of the Catholic colonies of the Odessa district in 1941, written by a Catholic priest, Father *Nikolaus Pieger*, who entered southern Russia from Rumania in the wake of the invading armies in August 1941. His reports, sent to his religious superiors at that time, were published in *Heimat im Glauben*, the quarterly religious supplement of *Volk auf dem Weg*, in the four issues of 1960 and the first issue of 1961. They give a graphic description of the situation as it was in the Odessa area in August-September 1941.

Obviously, in the short time available to me here, I can not deal with individual villages, nor at any length with a particular group of villages. I shall confine my description to the situation in the mother colonies, which are the best known, and deal with them in groups which shared a similar fate. This will give the broad picture that one gets from studying the documents that we have.

The westernmost of the German Black Sea colonies were those in Bessarabia. The people here had the great good fortune of seeing their province annexed to Rumania in 1918 and hence were not subject to

the Soviet regime between the wars. They heard from refugees about the trials and sufferings of their brothers across the Dniester, but they themselves had a relatively peaceful life under Rumanian rule till 1940. Unknown to them, certain secret clauses of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of August 1939 were to affect their future quite drastically.² Near the end of June 1940 the Soviet government, with the knowledge and consent of the Nazi Reich, demanded the immediate evacuation of Rumanian authority from Bessarabia and four days later Soviet forces moved in. This sudden development caused consternation among the Bessarabian Germans, who dreaded the life that the Soviet system would impose on them. Reassurance came quickly, however, when the announcement was made that plans were under way to repatriate them to Germany. On 5 September 1940 a Nazi-Soviet treaty was concluded providing for the immediate transfer of ethnic Germans from Bessarabia to the Reich. By the end of October 1940 the task had been completed, the whole German population of 92,000 persons having been evacuated from Bessarabia. In the next few months, before the outbreak of the Nazi-Soviet war in June 1941, most of these were settled in parts of western Poland that were to be incorporated into the Reich, predominantly in the Wartheland and in West Prussia. Thousands of Poles had been expelled from these areas to make room for the repatriated Germans.³

Across the Dniester from Bessarabia were the populous Odessa colonies, once among the most prosperous farming communities in Russia. They had deteriorated badly during the Soviet era, but all the old mother colonies and more than 200 daughter colonies were still in existence in the region between the Dniester and the Bug when the German and Rumanian armies occupied the area in August 1941. The earliest and most detailed description of conditions in these villages then is that of Father Nikolaus Pieger, who entered southern Russia at Tiraspol on 20 August 1941 and visited many of the villages in succeeding weeks.⁴ Because the Rumanian army had assisted the invading Germans on this part of the war front, the Dniester-Bug region, now called Transnistria by the Nazis, was assigned to Rumania for occupation. The only Nazi presence here were "action teams" (*Einsatzgruppen*) of Himmler's Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*), whose primary job was to eliminate Jews, Communists, and their collaborators from the occupied territories. That task having been completed, SS officers were assigned to survey, re-organize, and indoctrinate the surviving German population.

The Germans in Transnistria then numbered about 135,000. We have the statistics gathered by the SS officials for about 200 of the more than 250 German villages then still existing here. Among them were 27 of the 35 mother colonies located in the region. Missing are reports from Baden, Strassburg, Glueckstal, Bergdorf, Neudorf, Landau, Katharinental, and Johannestal. The statistics from these 27 mother colonies are representative of the general picture. Noteworthy is the shortage of men. In a total population of 45,459, these 27 villages had 27,991 persons 14 years and older, of whom only 12,000 (42.9 per cent) were male. Obviously the percentage of adult males was much smaller. More striking still is the small number of children per family. For 18 of the villages, for which the information is complete, the population consisted of 7,670 families, with 28,576 persons, of whom 11,117 were children under 14, an average of 1.4 children per family. How uncharacteristic of our people! This strikingly small number of children is explained by two facts: (1) the death rate among children had been very high during the 1930's due to inadequate food, clothing, and housing; and (2) many male heads of families had been deported to slave labor camps during that period. In these 18 villages, for instance, 2,160 families (28.1 per cent) lacked male heads. The picture was generally very similar in the numerous daughter colonies in this region.

Just east of Transnistria, in the region lying between the Bug and the Dnieper rivers, were the so-called Swedish colonies near Berislav, the old colonies of the Chortitza Mennonites, and many daughter colonies. Here the Soviets had a little more time to take action before the invaders arrived. In fact, plans for a mass deportation from the German villages had been completed, and their carrying out was prevented only by the unexpectedly rapid arrival of German troops. We have information about this region from the survey carried out under the leadership of Dr. Stumpf in 1942.

Conditions in the Chortitza Mennonite villages will serve as a good example of the situation here. In 16 villages of the Chortitza group there were 2,989 families, with 11,575 persons, distributed as follows:

1,966 men, 3,631 women and 5,978 children under 18. Thus only 35 per cent of the adults were men. Of the 2,989 families, 1,200 (40 per cent) were without male heads. Of the children, 5,098 were 15 and under, which is 1.7 children per family. Thus we see again, as for the Odessa colonies, a shortage of men and an unusually small number of children per family.

Except for the city of Odessa, which held out till October, the whole of the southern Ukraine west of the Dnieper was occupied by the invading armies by the end of August. Because the Nazi attack on June 22 had been a surprise and the invaders had advanced so rapidly, the Soviet authorities had not had time to

carry out major deportations of German colonists from this region. But the German villages had suffered heavy population losses earlier during the Soviet era, first through the terrors of the civil war and the famine that followed, and later through the deportations of the collectivization period. From the 18 Odessa villages used as a sample above, 2,425 persons were deported to slave labor camps in the 1930's, and from the 16 Chortitza villages 1,255 persons, in both cases predominantly men. At the outbreak of war there were heavy drafts into the Red army, 427 men from the 18 Odessa villages and 293 from the 16 Chortitza villages, and many more into labor battalions to dig trenches and tank traps and build fortifications. The general shortage of men in the German villages is therefore not surprising.

The typical German village that the invaders found when they reached this region was not an oasis of prosperity such as the invading German armies had found there during the first world war. The once proud German colonists now lived crowded into old houses badly in need of repair or in mud hovels built during the Communist era. Because clothing and shoes had been in short supply for years, they were inadequately clothed. Many suffered from malnutrition and deficiency diseases. Tuberculosis, malaria, trachoma, and dysentery were of common occurrence. The morale of the people was low. Because the products of their labor had repeatedly been taken from them, they had no incentive to work. Almost unanimously they were hostile to the Soviet system, which had brought them to this sorry state, and hence welcomed the German invaders as liberators.

Now what about the German villages east of the Dnieper? The invading armies did not reach these till September and October 1941, giving the Soviets more time. Here the prevailing pattern was mass deportation to Asiatic Russia. The first group to be subjected to it were the Germans of the Crimean peninsula. These had suffered heavily during the collectivization period of the 1930's. Numbering 43,000 at the Soviet census of 1926, they were said to be down to 14,000 by 1939. Those of them then still living in German villages were removed in the latter part of August 1941 and transported eastward.⁵ When the German armies occupied the Crimea a few weeks later they found only 4,900 Germans in the whole peninsula and these were living in the cities.

Mass deportation to Asiatic Russia was also the fate of the 25,000 Germans of the South Caucasus. These were deported in October 1941.⁶

The numerous Germans living in the region north of the Sea of Azov were also slated for mass deportation, but some escaped because the Soviet transportation system could not cope with the task in time. For example, in the last days of September 1941 the people of the Prischib colonies were assembled around various railway stations in their region in preparation for their deportation. For some groups the trains arrived to take them away; others were still at the stations days later when German troops arrived. We have statistics from 26 of the villages, gathered by SS officials from December 1941 to March 1942, indicating that 8,703 persons (63 per cent of their population) had been deported and 5,147 persons were still there. Because of the transportation problems the pattern was uneven: 11 of the villages still had 84 per cent of their population, their losses being mainly draftees into the army and labor battalions; from the other 15 villages 90 per cent of the population had been deported, the escapees being those who had managed to hide themselves or had been away from their home villages when the deportation took place.

The experience was very similar in the Molotschna Mennonite villages lying just to the east of the Prischib group. From the 39 Mennonite villages for which we have reports, with a population of 17,358 at the outbreak of the war, 6,945 persons were deported (40 per cent of the population) and 10,413 were still there. From 15 of the villages 92 per cent of the population had been deported; from the other 24 villages only 13 per cent.

Even as far east as the Mariupol colonies, although the percentage of people deported was higher there, seven of the twenty-two villages from which we have reports escaped deportation.

Thus, as the Nazi armies marched across the Black Sea region, they found not only most of the old German colonies west of the Dnieper river still existing, but also pockets of Germans east of the Dnieper all the way to the North Caucasus, who had escaped deportation. Altogether the number of Germans still remaining in the Black Sea region, including the Caucasus, was 225,000. At the Soviet census of 1926 this region had had a German population of 474,742.⁷ Obviously, more than half of the German Black Sea population was transported to Asiatic Russia in 1941.

The 225,000 who escaped deportation lived under German occupation until 1943 in the eastern region and until 1944 in the west. As the German armies withdrew westward, after the defeat at Stalingrad in 1943, the German Black Sea population was gradually evacuated and brought to the Wartheland in western Poland for re-settlement, thus ending the existence of the German Black Sea colonies. In a short time the

Wartheland too became untenable and in January 1945 the displaced Black Sea Germans fled westward again before the advancing Soviet armies. The majority were overtaken and were transported to slave labor regions in northern and eastern Russia. A few thousand escaped to West Germany,

NOTES

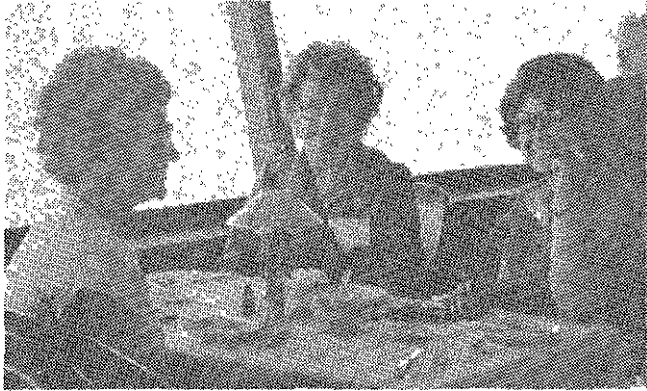
1. See *AHSGR WorkPaper No. 24*, Fall 1977, pp. 19-23.
2. A good account of the wartime fate of the Bessarabian Germans is given in *The Fate of the Germans in Rumania*, edited by Theodor Schieder, published by the Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees, and War Victims, Bonn, 1961.'
3. According to Schieder, p. 53, up to November 15, 1940, 294,336 Poles had been removed from these provinces and transported eastward.
4. See in particular *Heimat im Gfauben*, No. 1, January 1960, and No. 2, April 1960.
5. See *Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Russland* 1966, pp. 24-27.
6. See *Heimatbuch* 1966, pp. 30-32.
7. See Stumpp, "Das Deutschtum in Russland nach der Volkszählung von 1926," in *Heimatbuch der Deutschen aus Russland* 1957, pp. 103-114.

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ALL WORK AND NO PLAY ...
Not So at an AHSGR Convention



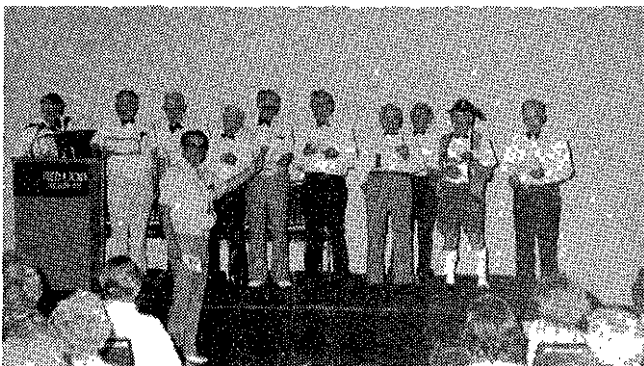
Sally *Hieb*, Emma *S. Haynes* and Nancy *B. Holland* had lunch at the Space Needle during the AHSGR tour.



We're "sitting out" this one — waiting for the next polka. Besides, it's fun to visit too.



Everyone enjoyed the *bratwurst* sandwiches and beer served in the lobby Saturday noon. Entertaining were two AHSGR members — Fred *Haun* of reiser, Idaho, playing the dulcimer, and William *Starkel* of Portland, Oregon, on the *accordion*.



The Oregon Chapter Volga Warblers entertained *with* folk music *during* chapter *visitation*.



Folk dancers from Oregon State University entertained during intermission at the ball which followed the banquet. From left are Brad *Johnson*, Liz *Joki*, Kareen *Kido*, Bill *Seeker*, Lisa Van Winkle, Steve *Mikesell*, Kathy *Kerr*, Rachel Baldwin, Janet *Ede*. Professor Kathy Kerr in the Department of Physical Education is the instructor and has taken the group on European tours.

THE VOLHYNIAN GERMANS AS I SAW THEM DURING THE FIRST DECADE OF THE COMMUNIST ERA

Emil J. Roleder

The Communist era began a little over two years after the exile of our Volhynian Germans, on October 29, 1917. It must be stated here that our Volhynian Germans were the first exiles of all Germans in European Russia who suffered the consequences of the far-reaching plan initiated February 2, 1915 by the Duma "to disinherit and liquidate all Germans in European Russia" after which they only waited for a reasonable excuse to set this plan into motion. This moment came when in March and April of 1915 the German armies made strong advances in southern Poland toward the east, taking the fortress *Przemysl* and the big city of *Lemberg*, and took 7,000 prisoners, putting the Russian army on the run and reducing their divisions of 100,000 men to 6,000.

At this point under the belief that possible German sympathizers in the State of *Volhynia* could do disservice to a retreating Russian army, the government found it necessary to remove this danger. Early in June they gave our people two weeks in which to be on the road east. On the day just before moving out on the road toward unknown parts of uncivilized Russia, our congregation gathered at the church for a final worship service. It was a never-to-be-forgotten scene of a grief-stricken congregation on its knees. Many of our members, including my own mother, would never return from exile to see their homes or worship in this church again.

Like a funeral procession we moved out in covered wagons. Six weeks to two months later, moving and staying together as congregations, we found ourselves beyond the Volga river, south, close to the city of Astrakhan on the Caspian sea. Most of the villagers were Kirghiz and Tatars. Every exile had to stay at least one year at the place he was sent to.

At the end of 1916 we moved north as far as *Nachoi*, a railroad station on the *Wiesenseite*. There we settled in a German colony named *Alexanderhoeh* where we lived until January 1918.

Now we come to the time of the revolution where my story is to begin. At the time of the revolution I was visiting with my sister and family, exiled with their congregation to Orenburg, situated on the banks of the Ural river, which marks the line between European and Asiatic Russia. It was on March 2, 1917 that the Tsar was forced to abdicate, and with *him* the double-headed eagle of the *Tsarist* flag, the *Rosiysskaya Znamya*, went down. Simultaneously there was an outburst of joy and celebration, especially among the soldiers. They were everywhere during the war years, singing and using foul language to openly deride the Tsar and Tsarina, which would have meant instant death in normal times.

Disorders, counter-revolutions, and partisan struggles followed for months. In July, A. F. *Kerensky* managed to become Prime Minister of the provisional government. But by October 29 the Communists came into power to stay for good. This was called the October Revolution, *Octjaberskaya Revolucia*. The red *Hag* of hammer and sickle, the *Krasnaya Znamya*, was raised. The Communists were in power.

How did our Volhynia German exiles feel about the Communist Revolution? Well, they could have felt that it was the *Tsarist* government which deprived them of their rights and legitimate citizenship, unjustifiably evicted us from our homes and permanently disinherited us. Moreover, fathers, husbands, and sons were on the war fronts. Two of my brothers were fighting against the Turks where one was wounded, while my oldest brother fought on the German war front. They were fighting for the Russian Empire like any other Russian citizen. As exiles our people had now lived with nightmarish mental suffering for over two years. Maybe we would be permitted to return to our home state again?

No. In spite of all this, there was no rejoicing. In the first place, there was still a deep respect for lawful authority. We felt rather more insecure now; we had a feeling that anything could happen. It was like "seeing through a glass darkly." And this was no doubt true of all Germans. There was a foreboding of worse things to come. We were proved right.

However, two months later in early January 1918, the Communists gave the order "to return all German exiles to their former homelands." Soon all were loaded in box cars again and on their way home. *Trainloads* from different directions and regions arrived in the homeland. Of course, many did not survive the starvation, contagious diseases, or the deplorable conditions of transportation, both ways.

This is how we saw the Communists from the time of the revolution until our return from exile. How did we see them from here on out, coming back to our homeland?

First we were not welcome in our homes, whatever was left of them. The Small Russians, *Galicians*,

from Galicia which was formerly part of the Austrian Empire, had been given our homes and all that went with them. The plan of the Tsarist government was to replace us by bringing these people in, and it was to be for good. So when the Communists brought us back, these people looked at us as intruders. The Communists on the other hand had their hands full with counter-revolutionaries, with partisan wars that continued for several years. They couldn't have cared less about us. But within a month the German army marched in, and in fact occupied most of the Ukraine. Our Galicians disappeared over night and we were free to move into our houses.

Under German rule came order, discipline, and a new way of life. All our people were at work to rebuild the places.

When, however, in November of the same year, 1918, Germany lost the war, its occupation forces in Volhynia retreated. The Communists took over again and were in full charge. Yet partisan wars continued for over two years more. Again there was looting, killing, confiscating of what little our people had. It wasn't easy to survive or to rebuild,

For our people, as I saw it, with parties chasing parties, there was fear and danger. People got killed on the street, never knowing where or when it was safe to go out or work outside. Cattle in the field got killed, and people who resisted the forced transportation of soldiers, provisions, or ammunition because they followed armies of other parties, were killed and we saw them lying in their blood in many homes. I had to drive from place to place until the horses, without food or water, were exhausted, and others had to be forced to move them. They went from farm to farm. Most of the farms were deserted in the daytime, people hiding in the woods for fear of being forced to find food where there was none, or of being forced for long tracks of driving. Anything was possible with no responsible government to protect,

It took close to four years until the Communists were finally quite firmly entrenched and in full power. Up to then they paid little attention to school, church, or other affairs. There was no monetary system. Trade was by grain, flour, meat, cattle, anything one had to do some business with.

No doubt most of you know that throughout the history of the Germans in Russia they maintained a parochial school system. As soon as we returned from exile, every congregation, or what was left of it, tried to re-establish its school, following the same traditional teaching method. For a number of years the existing government paid little or no attention to what was going on there, being occupied with fighting for its own life.

But by 1922, having been long in power and slowly gaining control in internal affairs, they turned their first attention to the school system. For several years they did not forbid religion as such. But they used other means to get to us. Ridicule was one means. Once a supervisor came in and among other things told the children to ask God to let some candy fall. "Now you ask me for some," he suggested, waiting. Then he would throw a few handfuls at them.

Next, they came to accuse the teachers of paying too much attention to religion and church services, (which every teacher conducted), but seriously neglecting teaching.

By 1927 another event affected the function of the parochial school system. The new Russian leadership enacted a new school law by which the school was separated from the church, which actually meant the end of the parochial school system. As a result each school teacher had to choose between serving the school or staying with and serving the church, conducting all functions of the church service only. To stay with teaching meant accepting a prescribed curriculum which included a special course in Communism.

I remember no teacher who remained on the teaching staff of the school. All remained with the congregation. For some time the schools remained without teachers. Since the school system was placed under the Jurisdiction of the Council of Education, gradually all teachers were replaced with younger men more sympathetic to the new school system.

By now orders were given that children under age eighteen could not be given religious instruction. To avoid confrontation, most former teachers followed the same old system, but to be on the safe side, we moved confirmation instructions to private homes, going quietly for every season from one home to another. Church services were continued regularly by the older teachers every Sunday morning as before.

What must be added here is that under the Communist regime all church buildings became at once the property of the government. This meant that the congregations had no church buildings of their own. They had to rent them from the government. Therefore at first once a year, then twice, gradually every few months, a government agent would appear and set the rent, or as they called it, the tax. Since at first there was no money, they demanded so many head of cattle, or so many bushels of grain which the still very

poor members could really not afford. But never, at no meeting did they decide to let them close the church.

The more religion is being taken from Christians, the more precious it becomes. Many remained without bread in those days, but would not be deprived of their Sunday worship services which were mostly reading services; there were many long periods when ministers were absent just because there were none. Yet the Word of God was always present, for a while, that is.

Already before we emigrated in 1928, there were ominous signs of worse things for the church to come. More heavy tax was demanded. And it was not for the sake of the money collected from the congregations that the taxes were so heavy. This went much deeper. It was an attempt to force people to give up worship, and finally to suppress religion altogether. Pastors, parochial school teachers, and any lay member having anything to do with church work, were placed on the black list without any rights of court or other protection.

Not long after we left, we received reports that church leaders, whoever they were, were deported or disappeared. Finally all Germans were exiled to the far east.

This is how I saw our **Vollhynian** Germans during ten years under Communism.



Pastor Emil J. Roleder

THE RUSSIAN GERMAN FOLKLORE PROJECT IN WASHINGTON

Donald A. Messerschmidt

The Russian German Folklore Project at Endicott, Washington (the "Endicott Project") is one year old. The project is old enough to be able to speak about its development and some of the initial activities and findings. But it is still too young yet to announce any major publications.

The project has two parts:

1 - A research component in which we are looking at the culture and structure of community life in Endicott, especially through the eyes and experiences of its older residents. This component is entitled "The Culture of Aging in a Rural Washington Community: The Russian Germans of Endicott." This research has been funded by the Washington State University research committee since July 1978, for one year.

2. A folklore/folk arts and exhibition component, which deals with the identification, classification, preservation, and exhibition of Endicott Russian German folk arts and folklore materials. This project is funded jointly by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (Folk Arts division) and matching funds from the Washington State Arts Commission, the International Foundation of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, and various local sources. Local sources include personal contributions, on which we rely to maintain the required match for the Arts grant. Funding for this project began in April 1979, for one year. Our first exhibition was on display at the Tenth International Convention of AHSGR in Seattle in June 1979.

To date, the Endicott Project has involved eight individuals including project assistants, technical and professional advisers, and a photographer and curator all under my direction. The project assistants include Richard Scheuerman of Endicott. Scheuerman has worked formally only on the folklore component of the project, but he has been of great assistance to us on the research component, as well. He is the author of several works on Russian German history and migration.¹ The principal assistant for research is Stephen L. Mikesell who has been with the project since July 1978.

Not the least involved in the research and exhibition activities of the project are many Volga German residents of Endicott and Colfax, Washington, whose support, encouragement, hospitality, and loan of their valuable folk arts materials and heirlooms for our exhibition, are all warmly welcome and appreciated.²

Where and How Did the Endicott Project Begin?

When I came to teach at Washington State University in 1977, I began seeking a nearby community in which to pursue my interest in rural American community life, as well as somewhere to pursue "action" anthropology aimed at working *with* (not just studying about) local people in some activity of local interest, and somewhere to train graduate students in the fine art of anthropological research.

I was faced with several possible choices. Whitman County, in eastern Washington, is situated in what has been called the "delicious isolation" of the Palouse Hills. It is a region of rolling wheatlands and small isolated farming towns. What I sought was a community in the Palouse which had a strong sense of cultural or ethnic identity or "roots." There were several to choose from, but Endicott, with its distinct Volga German heritage (and its renowned sausages) immediately caught my attention.

Anthropologists traditionally begin a research project with an exhaustive search of the literature; that is, we seek everything written about a place and a people in order to come to some understanding *before* launching fully into a study. At the university library and archives I found several items about Germans from Russia, German colonies on the Volga, Volga Germans in North and South America, and Russian Germans in the Pacific Northwest — especially at Endicott.³ What I found was fascinating — not so much for what I read and learned and not because I had a strong affinity with the Russian Germans (although later I would discover that in a round about way, I did have a Russian German heritage of my own),⁴ but because of what *questions* all that reading raised in my mind about the culture, ethnic identity, and folk traditions of these people. I was especially attracted to Scheuerman's account of the founding and settlement of Endicott in the 1880's mostly by people from one Bergeseite village called Jagodnaja Poljana on the Volga.

As an anthropologist, and as a German, the study of an immigrant community such as this one, transplanted virtually intact from one continent to another - from the Volga to the Palouse - was an exciting

prospect. Here was a unique chance to learn more about an ethnic group with a history of crisis and change, a group of people responding to changing circumstances across two continents and two centuries, and a people whose identity was still firmly intact despite the turmoil.

What Should be Researched at Endicott?

To begin with, I wanted to put together something of importance to the community, to myself and to social science. Noting two things about Endicott, I decided first to look at the phenomenon of "growing old" and adapting to old age and retirement in such an ethnic community. The two things I noted were (1) that by and large most of the residents of Endicott were older adults. This is a function of an *out*-migration of younger residents, as well as an emigration of retired wheat farmers from nearby ranches. These retirees move into town in search of a comfortable and familiar place close to kin and friends, (2) The second thing I noted was that, with rare exception, anthropologists studying gerontology (old age) have concentrated their efforts on the urban elderly, and to the degree that they have looked at growing old among ethnic people, they have concentrated on *ethnics* of color — Blacks, Hispanics, and others. By choosing the topic of aging among European ethnics, I was on relatively new ground in *gerontological* anthropology. It was a challenge I could not resist.

How to Start the Endicott Project?

The next step was to find some way of being introduced into the community. I started with Richard Scheuerman. He was encouraging and enthusiastic from the beginning. Scheuerman quickly became both a principal source of information and what anthropologists call a "fieldwork broker," someone whom the community people trust and respect who can assist in our making introductions and getting acquainted in the town.⁵

I also had to find a research assistant, preferably one of German heritage who spoke German, Stephen Mikesell was that choice. Mikesell had traveled in Europe, was a German speaker, and had a strong interest in German folk traditions. He fit right into the project, and was quickly accepted by Endicott residents. Mikesell has several numerous stories to tell about how he nervously approached certain people and events for the first time in Endicott. His success attests to his friendliness, his outgoing nature, his genuine interest and concern for Russian German culture, and the respect he has gained from all the townspeople. They have come to know him as more than "just another curious student from the university," but as a friend. As a measure of his success, Mikesell is spending the summer as a resident on one of the Endicott farms where he will combine farm work with further research.

The Folklore/Folk Arts and Exhibition Component.

For most of the past year, our efforts have been focused on the research about aging and community life in Endicott. The folklore/folk arts component of the Endicott Project is very new. It was developed in part as a requirement of the first research grant, and out of a need which some Endicotters have expressed about doing something with local folk traditions. Once we had begun, we soon recognized that the folk traditions were closely tied to the local culture and social expression of the older generation of Volga Germans. Therefore, it seemed natural to seek funding for a folklore/folk arts project as an extension of our Endicott research. The folk component has become our expression of "action" anthropology, involving a complement of local townspeople in identifying and preserving, and exhibiting, some of the most important material aspects of Russian German culture.

What Do We Mean by "Folklore" and "Folk Arts" in Endicott?

At the risk of stretching the concept of folklore, we are investigating and documenting at least three distant aspects of Endicott life and culture:

1. Folk literature and oral traditions. Sayings and proverbs, for example, as well as recollections of the past, word games, expressions of value and sentiment, songs, old books and other written records and documents of historic and traditional importance, and culinary traditions such as recipes and the proper and traditional Ways to prepare the pork at a sausage bee.
2. Folk arts and artifacts. These are the material aspects of the culture, the physical things which survive and often outlive their makers, things which tie the people to earlier times and places and to more traditional cultural expressions. They may include hand crafts and textiles, furniture making and embroidery styles, tools and implements, and local architectural styles and traditions.

3. Folk life and social organization. This is the most anthropological and the least **folklorish** of our studies and activities. These are the non-material patterns of social order within the community, including communal enterprises binding families and village together, as well as the interpersonal economic and social groupings which are variously called neighboring, partnerships, and cooperatives. Some of these traditions can be traced back to the **mir** form of communal farming in Russia. Some are exemplified today in various formal and informal voluntary associations in the churches and the community at large, including the **kaffee klatsch** in the Endicott Cafe, the community garden club, and the volunteer fire department.

Because the folklore/folk arts aspects of the **Endicott** Project is so new, we have not done much yet with the first of these three aspects of Endicott life and culture. We are planning to record, document, and study some of the oral traditions during the folklore course we will be teaching in the Endicott High School during the Fall of 1979. In that course, the students and townspeople will work together to record, collect, study, and preserve some of the old stories and sayings which are otherwise rapidly disappearing from Endicott.

Many of the material folk arts and artifacts, the second aspect of Endicott life we are studying, were represented in the Endicott Exhibition on display at the Tenth International Convention of **AHSGR** in Seattle. We also intend more exhibitions during the year, in Endicott and vicinity.

The third aspect of Endicott life which focuses on some of the organizing principles of social life have been especially interesting to us as anthropologists. Stephen **Mikesell** describes this facet of community life in his paper entitled "Cooperation in Endicott, Washington: A Russian German Tradition" (following this article in the *Journal*). Mikesell describes the underlying concept of cooperation within the Russian German community, tracing its roots back to the original "**Palouse Colony**" of the first Endicott settlers. He also describes some of the contemporary styles of cooperation and **community**. To be sure, not all people in Endicott (or in any other such communities) can cooperate and get along, but it does seem clear that "working together" and helping one's kinsmen and neighbors is a dominant theme in this community.

What is the Connection between Aging and Folklore in Endicott?

I mentioned earlier that after we began our studies of aging and community life and culture, we began to see a very important connection between the older residents and local folklore and folk arts and traditions. I will conclude with a brief discussion of what this means and how this finding ties the entire Endicott Project together as one effort.

Contemporary American society has been characterized by Margaret Mead as youth-centered, or "**pre-figurative**" in her terms. This sort of society is strongly influenced, if not dominated, by youthful rebellion, youth-oriented advertisement and marketing techniques, and a situation where adults and the older generations **tend** to learn from the young- Mead contrasts youth-centered "**pre-figurative**" society with an older, earlier form called "post-figurative" in which the young **lean** primarily from their **forebears**, the elders.⁶

We have found that despite the contemporary emphasis on youth in American society, in order to find out about the cultural and social traditions of the Russian Germans, we have to recall that earlier form of society, the one which relies on the older generation for knowledge and wisdom, truth and understanding. To get to the heart of Volga German ethnicity and folklore and history and culture in Endicott, we have turned to the elders of the community. There, with them, one finds the heart of community and ethnic identity, the roots of local folk traditions.

It is our consistent observation that that which is most cherished in Endicott is tradition. The emphasis on folk ways and folk things of Volga German origin are a focal point of social life and cultural identity. Emphasis on tradition is epitomized by traditional church activities, family and clan reunions, and various other ethnic boundary maintaining devices such as language, names, food, and particularly many of the material objects which have been carried across many generations from the past. There, in the midst of all this tradition, the Russian German identity lives on. In a sense, these traditions and materials are Russian German identity markers, important indicators of personal, family, and ethnic group heritage. It is in these identity markers that the spirit of Russian German ethnicity and heritage is kept alive and well. **In** these things is a rich folk heritage which is held in trust by the elders of the society.

NOTES

1. Richard **D. Scheuerman**, *Pilgrims on the Earth: a German-Russian Chronicle* (**Fairfield**, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1976), and *The Pacific Northwest's Volga Germans: A Historical and Religious Narrative* (to be published forthcoming).

originally on M.A. Thesis, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington, 1978),

2. Others involved in the Endicott Project in various capacities include; Ann McGuigan, curator; W. Scott Osterman, photographer; Casey Nagy, teaching assistant; Geoffrey Gamble, WSU linguist and folklorist; and John Guido, WSU archivist. We are also indebted to Mr. Don Schmick of Colfax, Washington, for his assistance with insurance to cover the Volga German Exhibition from Endicott, Washington during preparation and display at the AHSGR convention in Seattle. Those who loaned artifacts for the exhibition include Mrs. Molly Bafus, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Scheuerman, Mrs. Clara Litzenberger, Mr. Luke Benner, the Odessa (Washington) Historical Museum, and one anonymous donor.
3. Some of the principal sources on the Russian Germans of the Pacific Northwest besides Scheuerman's books are: Gordon R. Lindeen, *Settlement and Development of Endicott, Washington in 1930* (M.A. Thesis, Washington State University, Pullman, 1960); Elmer Miller, *The European Background and Assimilation of a Russian-German Group* (M.A. Thesis, State College of Washington, Pullman, 1929); Harm H. Schlomer, "Inland Empire Russian Germans," *Pacific Northwesterner* vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 57-64 (1964); and Oscar M. Undeberg, *Odessa. Washington: A History of Its Settlement and Development to 1920* (M.A. Thesis, Washington State University, Pullman, 1970).
4. Russian German ethnicity and cultural change have attracted considerable attention among historians, but relatively little among anthropologists until recently (see references in Timothy Kloberdanz, "The Volga Germans in Old Russia and in Western North America: Their Changing World View," *Anthropological Quarterly* vol. 48, no. 4, pp. 209-222 [1975], and in Albert J. Peterson, "German-Russian Catholic Social Organization," *Plains Anthropologist* vol. 18, pp. 27-32 [1973], for examples). Some researchers, like Timothy Kloberdanz and Richard Scheuerman, are of Russian German ethnic heritage. Although my own interest did not begin out of any ancestral affinity to the Russian Germans, I soon discovered, quite by accident, that I too had a collateral ancestral connection. In Karl Stumpp's monumental *The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862* (Lincoln, Nebraska: AHSGR, 1978), I found my own patronym with cryptic references to certain ancestral relatives emigrating from the same very tiny Wuerttemberg village of Aurich which was the birthplace of my own grandfather:
Messerschmid, Job. Georg, [born] 16. 9.1787, aus: ^uw/i/Vaihingen E.-Wu; Fr: Agnes Marg. Schwarz, [born] 16. 1. 1785; S: Georg Karl, [born] 1822,
This reference appears in Stumpp, p. 546, under emigration to Sarata, a Bessarabian settlement, for 1820 (or 1822?). Although this is only a collateral, or indirect, connection, and is tenuous at best, it all the more whetted my interest in Russian German studies.
5. Later, as the research progressed, I was further encouraged by the Russian German anthropologist and folklorist, Timothy Kloberdanz of North Dakota State University, as well as by historian Sidney Heitman of Colorado State University, and by folklorist Roger Welsch of the University of Nebraska. Lew Marquardt, a professor of humanities at Arizona State University, has also been very encouraging of the Endicott Project. To each of these scholars I owe considerable gratitude for their support, advice, information, and other forms of help.
6. Margaret Mead, *Culture and Commitment: A Study of the Generation Gap* (New York: The Natural History Press, 1970).



Donald A. Messerschmidt



Stephen L. Mikesell

COOPERATION IN ENDICOTT, WASHINGTON: A RUSSIAN GERMAN TRADITION

Stephen L. Mikesell

Folk traditions are important in all aspects of our lives. They may be observed in the way we celebrate our weddings or Christmases, the manners by which we eat, or the way we group together in order to get jobs done. Tradition is the result of what is called "ritualization." Ritualization occurs when we do a job or celebrate a festival in one special way, which is the way our parents did it, and their parents, and so forth. Eventually, as a way of doing something becomes ritualized, it may take on a meaning that is separate from the original reason for doing it this way.¹

One small example of Russian German ritual is the pinning of money on to the dress of the bride for a dance in the traditional wedding. Although this was originally intended just to provide the newly wedded couple with a little something to get started with, now it provides the added satisfaction of being German and of getting married in the German way.

Although ritualization is most obvious in such events as weddings, church services, funerals, and confirmations, which we call "traditions," it permeates virtually all of our daily life. By doing something one way, and not another, we are able to say that we are German or Serbian or Slav, or Protestant or Catholic. Any of us can sit down and identify many forms of ritualization in our own lives, and the folk traditions of which these rituals might be a part.

In the Endicott research, we are examining one particular group of folk traditions which deal with how the people of the town work together in order to get jobs done. These are the traditions of "cooperation."

Cooperation in Endicott is central to the identity of the residents, both as Russian Germans and as a community. It has best been expressed by the people themselves. Over and over we have been told, "The Germans do not let their own down." This sense of obligation and responsibility for their neighbors has enabled the people of Endicott to maintain their community and the sense of Russian German identity brought from Russia to eastern Washington.

When the settlers of Endicott emigrated from Russia, they of course brought along many modes of cooperation which had been established in Russia, or perhaps even earlier in Germany. These are the traditions that they drew upon in setting up their homes in this new land, and they are the base for the traditions that permeate their lives today.

The most obvious of these are integral to what Albert Peterson has called the "German Village" type of settlement. In the traditional German setting, the villagers cluster their houses, churches, and businesses together and farm the surrounding land. This form was brought through Russia to the United States by the Russian Germans. In Russia, the village took on an added dimension with the collective ownership of land by the village as a whole, in what was called the *mir* system. At regular intervals the land would be reap-portioned, with each family being reassigned a new share of land. The size of the share depended on the number of sons within each family. Peterson, quoting F. S. Laing, writes that "these 'common lands' gave a 'communistic character to the village and served to unite the inhabitants more closely in social life, so as to give it the appearance of family life on a large scale.'" ²

The first Russian German settlers in Endicott did, in fact, set up a m/T'-like communal farm called the "Palouse Colony," in 1882. It did not last long, however, considering the vast acreages of uninhabited fertile land for the taking on all sides. Yet the characteristic village center and the very close social interaction and cooperation of the Russian *mir* and the German village were utilized and have subsequently persisted in many ways. The result has been that the community has been able to focus in on itself, drawing from and preserving much of its rich tradition, rather than having its life diluted by the urban mainstream as has happened to many of America's rural communities. One of these rich folk traditions has been the sense of responsibility, mentioned above - the responsibility to help each other.

Basic to cooperation in any community is exchange, since cooperation is essentially the informal exchange of efforts, goods, and services in order to help one another. We have been told that especially in the early years in Endicott, there was much of what anthropologists call "informal exchange." In other words, people traded the use of equipment, of land, and even labor without using money. A man may have loaned his neighbor the use of a hoe, and at a later date the same neighbor would help this farmer fix the harness for his team. No one would keep an exact record, but each would have in his head a feeling about how much he owed his surrounding neighbors. This type of exchange had an added benefit in that it gave more strength to a man's relationship with his neighbors and relatives. It tied people together in the common endeavors.

Those who are mutually indebted to one another have an investment in working together. This is not only a basic type of cooperation in and of itself, but the mechanics of how it worked are basic to all types of cooperation in Endicott. We are not yet sure of the full dimensions of this exchange in Endicott, either in the past or in the present, but by looking at informal exchange we hope to learn how the Russian Germans valued a neighbor's labor or the use of his equipment. Furthermore, by learning who exchanged what, we can discover how people defined their relationships with each other.

I have identified several types of cooperation in my research:

1. The first is historical cooperation. An example is that of helping new immigrants to settle in the town.
2. The second is a group of traditional ways of cooperating on a regular basis which have continued to various extents to this day.
3. The last are the recent, more formal approaches to cooperation which have built over and subsequently utilized the old styles of cooperation.

The first of these, historical cooperation, is exemplified in giving a helping hand to new immigrants when they arrived in Endicott. This help came directly out of the sense of obligation of the residents of the German village in Russia to each other. It encouraged the transplantation of people from the mother colony, Jagodnaja Poljana on the Volga river, to the new town of Endicott in the Palouse Hills of eastern Washington. This group immigration of the villagers facilitated the subsequent maintenance of the original community, including its traditional ties and expectations - those of kin, neighbors, et cetera - in two continents.

Peterson describes this migration of village groups as common to the Russian German experience.³ And, we are sure that many other Russian Germans can give similar examples from their own experiences. Most important, it highlights the sense of community obligation and effort which characterizes Endicott and helps bind the town together.

The second form of traditional cooperation includes events and activities which are characterized by common endeavor. One example is the yearly sausage making get-together, or "pig-sticking" as several individuals have called it. This still occurs annually in Endicott. In the context of being German and maintaining the German identity, this is one of the most commonly mentioned traditional cooperative events.

Work groups, composed of neighbors, get together for a few days in winter in order to prepare the sausage. This home sausage making is still done today by several groups of families and neighbors, although it is more "ritualized*"; that is, it is not done because there is no other reasonable way of getting meat, but because it is a meaningful event in and of itself. It is a German get-together which has been done this way year after year. According to several people, the sausage is much better when it is home-made, in the "German way." Having tasted it we heartily agree! Finally, these get togethers maintain old cooperative relationships between groups of neighbors.⁴

Where the sausage making was based on neighbor relationships, there has been and is still a folk tradition of cooperation in the form of fanning partnerships between individuals. These, today, are mostly between relatives. Relatives, because of the nature of kin relations, are obligated to each other even more strongly than non-relatives. Although this may cause problems because of closeness and sensitivities between kinsmen, we have found that partnerships may be easier to maintain between relatives than between non-relatives, especially in such a traditionally oriented community as Endicott where there is a high premium placed on good working kin relationships. The partnerships may be between brothers, father and son, cousins, or other relatives. Those between older and younger relatives are usually within the structure of the retirement tradition. Many of the older experienced fanners slowly transfer the running of their farms and ranches to their sons or a younger relative, until the bulk of the management is eventually transferred to the new generation.

The retired farmer often returns to the family house within the town, re-emphasizing the importance of the traditional German village center. In his western Kansas study of Russian Germans, Petersen describes a "two-house" system, where the farmer on his farmstead also maintained a second house in town.⁵ In Endicott, we have found a semblance of this system, much weakened because of the cost of maintaining two houses (which Peterson also notes) and although some retirees have moved into long established family homes in town, many have had to purchase their town retirement house or have erected mobile homes. Our findings agree with Peterson's that, "Self identity with the village has persisted, and even on the isolated farmstead one considers himself a part of the village. What appears to have developed is an extended village or neighborhood whose boundaries are well defined by the local inhabitants."⁶

As the elder Russian Germans return to live in town they continue to be supported by the traditional

flow of life. There is no disruptive break with traditional social and cultural traditions (beyond the physical break of retiring from active farming), hence they maintain an identity and an independence lost to many other of the nation's elderly. Furthermore, completing the circle, as cultural repositories these elderly people insert new life into the old Russian German traditions. And thus, in a never ending flow, the old traditions are continually renewed within the town, helping to maintain the vitality of the community and of the ethnic identity,

When the people of Endicott say, "The Germans do not let their own down," they are usually thinking of those times when people are in serious need. When a farmer has broken his leg, or when a mother of a large family becomes sick, the neighbors are always there to help. Although this can probably be found in many rural communities, it is seen in Endicott as an important part of the German's responsibility to his or her own people. By organizing a harvest bee, a sausage-making bee, a house-painting bee, or a lawn-laying bee (all of which are common to the experiences of Endicott residents), the farmers and townspeople draw upon and put new life into the traditional ties which have held the community together for the past two centuries - ties of kin, of being neighbors, of being German.

Finally, laid over the traditional modes of cooperation, are the more recent, more formal types of cooperation, our third type. The most obvious example of this is the local farm producer's cooperative, the Endicott Wheat Growers Co-op. It too has played an important role in the maintenance of the community folk traditions. The Co-op represents the community as a whole to the outside markets, allowing the individual farmers to focus their activities within the community rather than having to devote a large amount of time to themselves interacting in the outside, more urban-oriented national and international markets. Thus, they have been able to do two things simultaneously: (1) grow an important cash crop, wheat, which is shipped all over the world, and (2) maintain and utilize many of the rich traditions with which they have grown up and which tie them to their folk heritage as Russian Germans.

The anthropologist then, by focusing attention on the internal culture and particularly the structure of folk tradition — in addition to its outward appearance in the folk arts, artifacts, and folklore of the community — can begin to explain and predict people's behavior. What we have found is that underlying the social, cultural, and economic life of Endicott, and permeating its rich history, is a folk tradition of cooperation, a "spirit of cooperation." This may not be unique to Russian Germans, but it has helped this community to maintain its unique identity.

NOTES

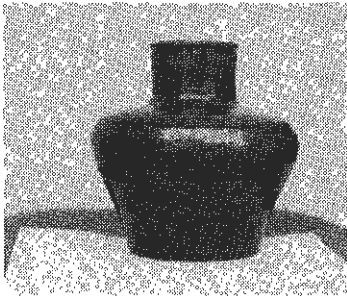
1. George D. Spindler, *et al*, *Burgbach: Urbanization and Identity in a German Village* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology, 1973), pp. 51-53.
2. Albert J. Peterson, "German-Russian Catholic Social Organization," *Plains Anthropologist*, 18 (1973), 27-29.
3. Peterson, pp. 27-32.
4. Given the acknowledged importance of sausage making as a key folk tradition in Endicott, and among Russian Germans widely, we are presently seeking private and public financial support to make a feature film of the event. Interested persons should contact The Endicott Project, Anthropology Department, Washington State University, Pullman, WA. 99164.
5. Peterson in *Plains Anthropologist*; see also Albert J. Peterson, "The German-Russian Settlement in Ellis County, Kansas," *The Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal*, 5, No. 1 (1968), 52-62.
6. Peterson, *Plains Anthropologist*, p. 30.

THE VOLGA GERMAN EXHIBITION FROM ENDICOTT WASHINGTON

One of the many highlights of the Tenth International Convention of AHSGR in Seattle was the museum exhibition of folk arts, artifacts, documents, and photographs from Endicott, a Volga German farming community in eastern Washington. This exhibition included 25 material objects, and 10 photographic collages in both color and black and white. All of the material objects were secured on loan from individuals and families in Endicott, and in one case from the Odessa (Washington) Historical Museum.

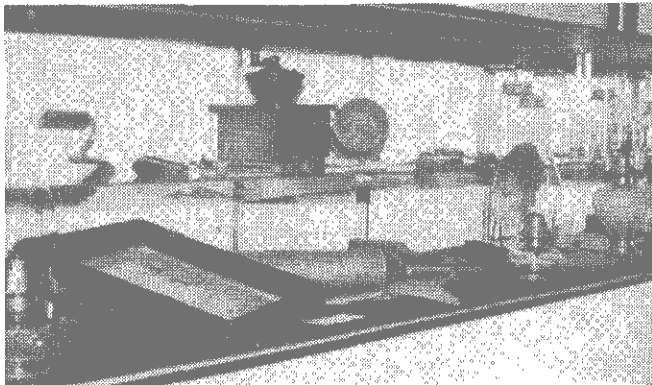
The Volga German Exhibition from Endicott Washington was prepared by the Endicott Project at the Department of Anthropology, Washington State University in Pullman, Washington, by the following individuals; Donald A. Messerschmidt, Endicott Project Director; Stephen L. Mikesell, Research Assistant; Richard D. Scheuerman, Project Assistant; Ann McGuigan, Curator; W. Scott Osterman, Photographer; and Geoffrey Gamble, Linguist and Folklorist.

On exhibit was this handcrafted ceramic vase, one of the few objects preserved throughout the entire history of the Germans from Russia. The artifact, witness to over two-hundred years of migration and upheaval has been handed down in the Jungmann and Scheuermann families for generations and is now in the possession of Darlene Cowden of Seattle, Washington. According to family tradition, the vase was carried in the eighteenth century from an ancestral German village to the Volga colony of Jagodnaja Poljana and from thence to the United States in 1898.

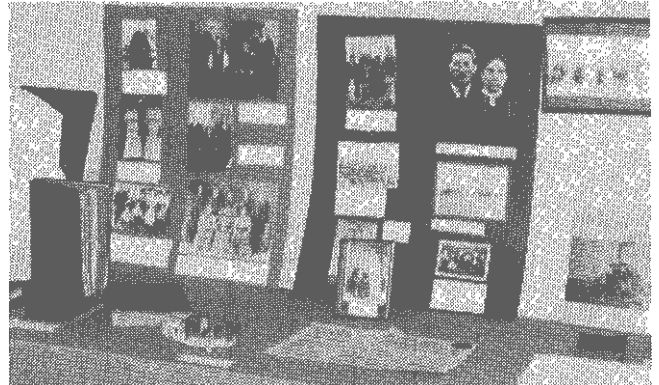
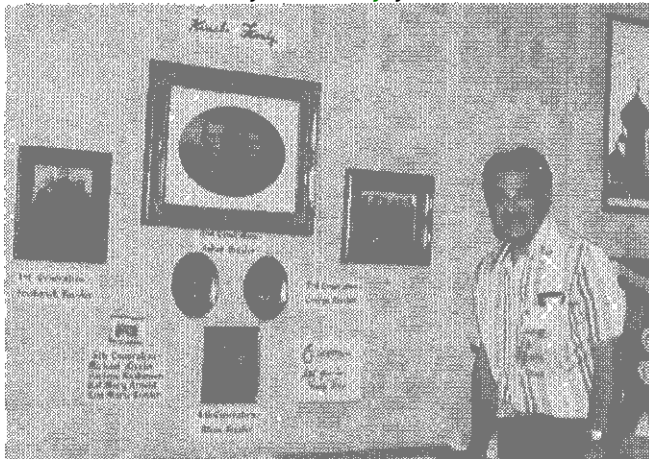


THE MUSEUM

Sharing the exhibit room were museum displays planned by the Greater Seattle Chapter.



Carl and Edna Miller of Seattle brought artifacts and memorabilia for everyone to enjoy.



Fred and Edythe Roth arranged a display of old books and pictures of family and the wheat country.

Alvin Kissler is justifiably proud of his wall displaying six generations of the Kissler family.

PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH

The following narration is taken from the script of a pageant presented to the Tenth International Convention of the Society by the Greater Seattle Chapter of the AHSGR. The story of the Germans from Russia and their migration to the Pacific Northwest was adapted by Jean A. Roth from the book Pilgrims on the Earth by Richard D. Scheuerman.

Tonight a story is presented about a group of people whose travels have been exceeded only by their faith and struggles. The saga of the first German Russians to America's Pacific Northwest is one with a scenario reaching throughout the world, from Central Europe to the Russian Volga region, across the Atlantic Ocean to Midwest America and to the Pacific.

One hundred years ago, in the fall of 1875, a number of families elected to leave their villages in Russia's Volga river region and come to America. Being both devout and practical people, they came with little more than wooden spoons and Bibles. They were followed by many others in the years to come, not only from the Volga, but from the Black Sea, from Bessarabia, from Volhynia, and other parts of Russia.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, literally millions of immigrants poured into Ellis Island and other northeastern ports of America and Canada. The German Russian people began to filter throughout the nation in family and village units until today, scarcely a state in the Union is without some remnant of those people who once inhabited the vast steppes of southwestern Russia. Leaving their troubled German homeland in the eighteenth century, they had sought a better way of life in Russia. As part of a program of colonization instigated by the Russian Empress Catherine II, approximately 27,000 people emigrated from Germany to Russia between 1763 and 1769, and founded 104 colonies on the lower Volga river.

Under Alexander I, German colonization in the Black Sea region was promoted and continued for many years, bringing some 50,000 Germans to this region and settling them in more than 200 colonies. In the 1860's there was a substantial movement of Germans into Volhynia, so that by 1871 there were 28,000 Germans settled in 139 villages in this province. Altogether, more than 100,000 Germans migrated to Russia.

United States railroad companies, including the Union Pacific and Northern Pacific, began to send agents to Russia in an attempt to secure a number of dependable colonizers to develop agricultural areas in the Midwest and the "Great Plateau of the Columbia river" in the Pacific Northwest. The bulk of their claims rested on wishful speculation, but the saturation of southwestern Russia with leaflets advertising the prosperous conditions overseas succeeded in attracting a substantial number of ... Germans to the "lamp upon the golden shore" of America.

The bulk of their numbers who came first eventually found their way to Kansas, Nebraska, and other states in the Midwest where they engaged in railroad work, farming and private business . . . Upon their arrival in America, new immigrants were always met with boisterous claims of the railroad promoters who sought their business, passing out tracts. . . which elaborated the wonderful conditions existing throughout the nation. Land was cheap and opportunity plentiful . . . They also assured many destitute immigrants of guaranteed jobs by employing them in railroad construction gangs . . .

But the majority of these immigrants worked for the railroad only as long as it took to get settled. Their primary occupation for centuries had been farming. With miles of rolling hills covered with thick bunch-grass everywhere, it was only a matter of time before they began the arduous task of slowly turning the sod and planting their first crops.

Despite minor inconveniences, it seemed that these early immigrants had established themselves . . . However, events were now transpiring in the realms of agriculture and railroad development which would prove a sufficient enough force to drive a segment of their ranks ... to the Pacific coast . . . Massive hordes of grasshoppers so infested the fields and air of the Great Plains, that the Germans were left with little seed to replant. A strange gloom was noted throughout the land as the swarms darkened the mid-day sky. The subsequent drought also adversely affected them, and some remarked of the horror felt during the frightening electrical storms, to which they had not been accustomed in Russia, which were often accompanied by devastating tornadoes.

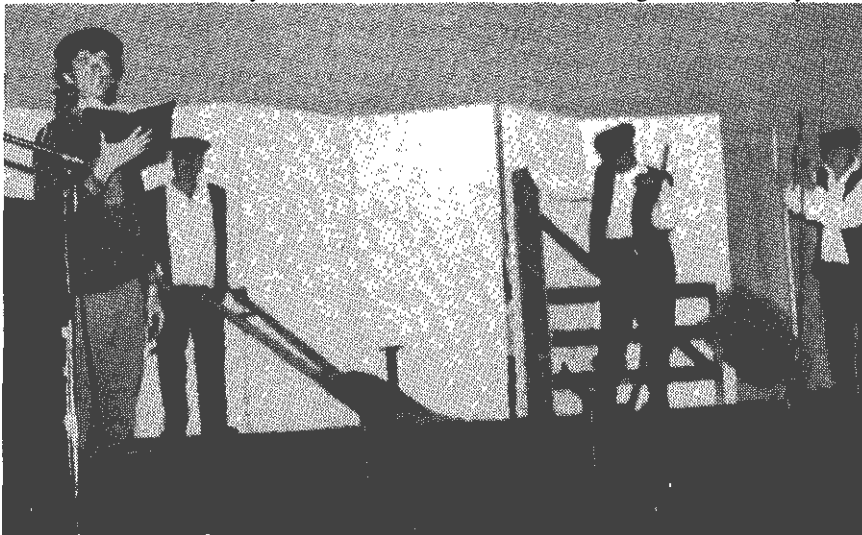
Then the Homestead Acts . . . gave impetus to westward expansion . . . The completion of the first transcontinental railroad ... in 1869 was another factor. In the process of its completion the Union Pacific laid over a thousand miles of track, and soon Congress allowed railroad officials ... to acquire land adjacent

to their tracks . . . But it was plain to see, that while the Iron Horse had conquered the West, settlers were now needed to tame it ... The determined pioneers continued toward their final destination, the Pacific Northwest. . . In preparation for the trip, the women had sewn garden seeds into clothing to ensure good **plantings** in their new home.

Some came by train to California, by steamship to Portland, then traveled by carts on the Emigrant Road which went along the mighty Columbia river. Others, carrying a myriad of belongings and pioneer necessities . . . traveled in covered wagons drawn by balky mules ... by wagon train over the California and Oregon Trails, thus becoming a part of that historic great migration of the Old West.

In preparing the children for the long trek . . . from Russia ... the parents would often tell them enchanting stories about their future homes on the other side of the world, "We're going to America, the land where milk and honey flow . . , where the cows come home with **Johannisbrot** upon their horns." Not long after their arrival to the area, the children would steal the wild bee honey from the hollow trees along the **Palouse** river, where the pastures were so thick and green that the cows' udders would spurt out milk, being so full as they ran home each evening. Then the parents reminded them, "Look-see, you have the milk flowing from the cows and honey flowing from the trees, **Just** as we said it would be like here when we were in Russia."

The influx of the German **settlers** not only provided manpower to complete the railroad, but they also served as hard-working farmers . . . One farmer, who had first settled in Kansas . . . decided to join his cousins in Washington. The music of his whistle pervaded the air around the colony as he worked the fields, and in the evenings he would ascend the bluff and sing the beautiful German hymns with a voice that echoed throughout the valley in which their small colony was nestled.



*One of the tableaux, showing a farming scene, included **Richard Scheuerman** expressing than thankful-ness with the singing of the hymn "How Great Thou Art." **Dick** is author of *Pilgrims on the Earth on which the dialogue was based.**

A large spring and brook provided all the water they needed and farming was confined at first to large gardens of potatoes, corn, and melons. The settlers soon found that wheat and barley grew particularly well on the chestnut brown soil as well as oats, which were planted on the areas bordering the **bluffs**.

An orchard of fruit trees was planted and a small herd of cattle was also maintained by the settlers. The pasture land was thick with **wild** grasses which transformed the snow-whipped wintered valley into a verdant low**land** every spring. A watchful **eye** had to be on the livestock as they grazed along the river since large packs of coyotes roamed the hills and cougars were a common sight on the rocky precipices.

"The land was rich, and soon the Palouse was filled with wheat: Turkey Red, Red Russian, Club, and **Bluestem**. Sugar **beets** helped farmers in the **Yakima** Valley to make a living. Along the Columbia in the **Wenatchee** Valley fruit orchards dotted the hillsides.

Communication between the settlers and their families in the Midwest and Russia facilitated immigration as many forwarded to relatives the necessary funds for travel which were then paid off in labor. Settlers by the thousands were flocking to the Inland Empire during these years as the only qualification needed to obtain a farm was a strong back and willing heart.

Others traveled widely throughout the Northwest as they continued to work for the railroad ... or for coastal industries such as the nucleus formed in **Bellingham** to work in the lumber mills, or those

in Tacoma working in the sawmills and factories. By 1920, there were approximately 21,480 first and second generation German Russians living in the three Pacific Northwest states . . . having had a major impact in the region during the dynamic era of pioneer settlement, playing an integral role in the development of business and agriculture . . . The faith and courage which these pioneers and their ancestors showed . . . made them truly "Pilgrims on the Earth."

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions which the German Russians have given the people of the world results from their skill as agriculturalists. Regardless of where led, for centuries they have always been engaged in farming the land. By aspiring to the basic principles of the Christian way of life and through diligence in labor, they have played an integral part in the development of business and agriculture in the Pacific Northwest and the enrichment of American culture.

Since this country's entrance into World War II, the descendants of the original German-Russian immigrants who settled . . . have become almost totally absorbed into American society. Nuances of their tradition are still evident in many homes though, since traces of their unique cooking styles and special foods such as German sausages and breads still linger. Tattered and torn songbooks and Bibles are mute testimony of the faith in God which the pioneers maintained despite countless tribulations. Tall church steeples which they constructed can be seen throughout the area against the placid rural landscape.

They settled in Odessa, and Ritzville; in Dryden, Farmer, and Quincey; in Wapato, Toppenish, Endicott, and Walla Walla; they came to College Place, Colfax, Marlin, and Krupp. To the coast they came - Vancouver, Hazel Dell, Perndale, and Bellingham. And — they came here — to Puyaliup, Bremerton, Tacoma, and Seattle. The list of towns that felt their influence could go on and on. They came to make a new life — and ensure that their children, and their children's children would know only prosperity and freedom. The years have passed and there are precious few of these people still left with us.

Each later generation, never fully understanding those struggles and sacrifices, looks for answers to the questions, that perhaps were not asked in time. There are those who came from Russia as small children, who are now grown, and their younger brothers and sisters who grew up in an immigrant household. They struggle to recapture fragile memories of their childhood. There are those who have never set foot in the land of their forebears, who grew up with only small reminders of their background. They have only the stories they have been told but now they seek to claim the German-Russian legacy that is rightfully theirs. And there are those whose interest has not yet been ignited, whose questions are still to come, who will one day ask for the answers that are a part of their heritage.

As our nation recently paid tribute to its bicentennial of freedom, the . . . Germans from Russia . . . whose story we tell, entered into their second century of life in America. May it see us maintain the same blessings of liberty and fundamentals of faith realized by our forefathers, for *"in Goffes Segen, ist alles gelegen."*



Pictured here is the cast for "Pilgrims on the Earth." Kneeling in front row center are Jean Roth and Alvin Kissler, the narrators.

THERE WAS ALSO TIME OUT FOR RELAXATION

More than 500 of us went on a harbour cruise which took us to **TillEcum** Village located on an island in **Puget** Sound. There we enjoyed an Indian Salmon Bake.



Boarding the "**Goodtime**".



A group of early birds getting the choice seats.



Cruising in front of the Seattle Skyline.



On **board**-Mrs. Ellen Fuller, a friend, and Mrs. Theodore **Heinz**.



In the foreground on the boat, from left, are Ruth Amen, her brother **Reinhold** Amen and Adam **Giesinger**, all enjoying some good conversation about the convention week.



Enroute to **Tillicum** Village we were entertained by an **accordionist** who played familiar German songs.



As the group arrived at **Tillicum** Village, they lined up to receive a cup of freshly prepared clams.



Alvin Kissler and Jean Roth, convention chairman, led the group in community singing.



Part of the crowd at **Tillicum** Island "Long House" on **Blake** Island for the salmon bake.

FROM WAGON TRAILS TO IRON RAILS: RUSSIAN GERMAN IMMIGRATION TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Richard D. Scheuerman

Wir sind ja all recht gut empfangen,
Und koennen jo nichts mehr verlangen
Wie glicklich seinjo wir,
Dass wir sind alle hier,
Jetzt fallen wir auf der Knie
Und danken Gott dafuer.

We were welcomed with open arms.
Now we're free from want and harms,
Sorrow's turned to jubilee
We've come safe o'er the sea.
And we fall to our knees
To praise God thankfully.

In the words of this simple song, "*Die Reis' die war erzogen*" (translated by Nancy Holland)¹ we see reflected two underlying themes in the journeys of our people—the continuing quest for security in a free land and gratitude to God for His deliverance. Although America's Midwest attracted the earliest and most extensive settlement of Germans from Russia, the Pacific Northwest is no less typical in its rich experience with these hardworking farmers who were not always "welcomed with open arms" as this song would suggest. The story of how our people came to this region is fascinating not only because this migration continues to the present day but also because it began at a time when the American West was still "wild and wooly." The curry-comb of eastern civilization had not stroked the open ranges our people first encountered ninety-eight years ago. It was in 1881 that eight weary families from the Volga's *Wiesenseite* set forth from Kansas to San Francisco by rail, then to Portland by steamship and finally, the following year, by covered wagon to eastern Washington. Simultaneously a group from the *Bergseite* crossed trails with them in 1882 at Walla Walla after having gone from Nebraska to Utah by rail and then over the Oregon Trail in a wagon train to Oregon and Washington. The epic journeys undertaken by these and subsequent Russian-German groups have all the elements of a frontier western—complete with Indian horse-raiding parties, hazardous trail drives, near fatal mountain crossings and the unsavory business practices by land speculators to which our people sometimes fell victim. And while some who "wested" also "busted," by far the majority endured the hardships and prospered to the extent that over 21,000 Russian Germans were living in the three northwest states by 1920.² (Almost half of these were first generation pioneers.) Thousands more lived in British Columbia and Alberta. The number of their descendants today in the greater Northwest has been conservatively estimated at no less than 100,000.

But who exactly were these people who first ventured West and of what Russian German groups were they a part? In the history of our region one hears mention of many German names—Gustavus Sohon, the famous artist with the Steven's expeditions, Frederick Weyerhaeuser who launched his timber empire. Henry Villard, the Bavarian financier who made and lost a fortune establishing the Northern Pacific Railroad. I would like to name a few, though, who while perhaps not gaining the prominence of these others, have collectively played no less a part in nurturing our rich heritage here in the Pacific Northwest—men like Phillip Green, Frederick Rosenoff, J. R. Scrag and Cornelius Jantz. The memories of their exploits remain clear in the minds of those few of that frontier generation who still survive. Each of these men and others like them, led separate groups of Russian Germans to the varied landscapes of the Northwest from their homelands in Russia—the Black Sea region, Volhynia and the Volga. It is fitting, that on this occasion here in Seattle, our tenth convention, we can honor those who first came here nearly a century ago.

Since 1881, Russian Germans have immigrated to the Pacific Northwest either directly or after a circuitous journey, from eight separate colonial areas in Russia. These are, in the chronological order of their arrival in the Northwest, the Volga colonies (1881), Liebental colonies (c. 1890), Beresan colonies (1891), Bessarabia (1892), the Volhynian Swiss Mennonite colonies (1899), the Chortitza Mennonite colonies (1902), the Gluckstal (Cherson) colonies (1909), and the Hutterite colonies (1956).

The recent migration of Hutterite Brethren to the Northwest is indicative of a national settlement pattern as the three northwest states have witnessed a consistent population growth, adjusted for normal expansion, over the past several years. The Hutterites in Washington, as elsewhere in North America, live quite apart from the rest of the populace, however, because of certain aspects of their social and religious life. A group of Hutterites led by Eli Wollman founded the Deep Creek colony in 1956, located in a beautiful valley near the Spokane River about twenty miles west of the city of Spokane. Attracted by the availability of land in the area, the group was established as a daughter colony of the Darisleut Pincher Creek colony in southwestern Alberta, Canada.³ With their communal life and successful farming practices, expansion of the Deep Creek colony took place in cooperation with another Darisleut colony from Lewis-

town, Montana. This second colony near Warden, Washington, was founded in 1971 following the purchase of a bankrupt farming operation with extensive acreage in that dry region of central Washington. Led by Jacob Wollman, the colony today is a blossoming enterprise reflecting both hard work and skillful management. A third colony was located on land purchased in 1976 near Marlin, Washington. Each community numbers about fifty people and in Wollman's words, "is the closest thing in Christian living to Utopia."⁴ Historically, however, the Hutterite experience has been characterized by religious persecution. They trace their origins to 1528 when a group of religious refugees fleeing to Austerlitz, Moravia first established a system of communally shared material goods. Like other Anabaptist groups they were often maligned for their pacifistic beliefs and eventually driven to Transylvania and Wallachia. To avoid further conflict sparked by the Russo-Turkish War, a remnant accepted an invitation from a Russian general in 1770 to settle in the Ukraine.⁵ They eventually located in the Molotschna region where they prospered until 1872 when Russia's program of military conscription once again brought them into conflict with the state. Accordingly, the entire fellowship of 700 immigrated to the United States where they founded their three original colonies in South Dakota. The subsequent movement of some to Canada occurred after some had sought exemptions from military service there, these being granted in 1899.⁶

Russian Germans from the Gliickstal colonies near the Black Sea also immigrated to the Pacific Northwest although in fewer numbers than most other groups. In 1909 immigrants from the colony of Neudorf arrived in Neuberg, Oregon, which was their principal settlement in this region. Most of the Glueckstal colonies were founded between 1809 and 1810 and were of Wuertemberg origin.

The fourth and fifth surges of Russian-German migration to the Northwest involve two Mennonite groups-those from Volhynia and the Chortitza district near the Black Sea. The Mennonites from West Prussia who founded the Chortitza colonies were the first of their number to emigrate to Russia, arriving in a group of 228 families near Alexandrovsk on the Dnieper river in 1789. The number of their colonies expanded rapidly from the original eight as prosperity, large families, and renewed Mennonite immigration to that area led to acquisitions of additional land.⁷

Other Mennonites from West Prussia were attracted to lands near Ostrog in Volhynia as early as 1793 when it was still Polish. Additional settlement in that area by Swiss Mennonites took place in the early 1800's although many later relocated to the Black Sea region.⁸ Large scale German immigration to Volhynia was renewed in the 1860's, however, in response to the more troubled political and economic climate elsewhere. But this security too, was short-lived. The effects of the Pan-Slavist movement under Alexander II were felt in all of Russia's border regions as anti-German feeling intensified. The ukase of June 4, 1871 repealed all privileges including freedom from military conscription originally granted by Catherine the Great in 1763. Once again the Mennonites sought a new homeland and, through well established contacts with their brethren in America, began their exodus to the Midwest in the 1870's. A number of the Volhynian Mennonites settled originally in South Dakota under the leadership of Andreas Schrag who had represented the Volhynian Swiss Mennonites in the large 1873 Mennonite scouting expedition to Canada and the United States. Some families later decided to move westward and attempted to colonize near Eugene, Oregon. These families, included Schrags, Gerings, Grabers, Steiners, Waltners, and Welthys. Dissatisfied with conditions there, Jacob R. Schrag led a group of eight men to investigate the possible sale of six townships of railroad land advertised between Ritzville, Lind, and Odessa. Favorably impressed with the lands, they later brought their families to the area and established the Menno Church.⁹

Some of their co-religionists from the Chortitza district who had also settled in the Midwest, journeyed out in 1903 under the leadership of Cornelius Jantz and settled in the Black Rock range near Marlin. Other Chortitza Mennonite family names there include Dirks, Dyck, Ensz, Franz, Schmidt, Peters, and Voth.¹⁰ The panorama of such travels by our people reflects all the drama of a historical novel. One of our local historians, Harm Schlommer, records that in the case of the Gering family, the family patriarch, Moses Gering, born about 1760, was among those German Palatinates who migrated to France near the Swiss border. In 1791 the family relocated to Einsiedel, Galicia (Austria) and then to Michelsdorf, Poland in 1797. Following the Napoleonic invasion of Russia the family journeyed to Edwardsdorf, Russia in 1817 and some participated in the founding of Waldheim and Herodish in 1837. In 1874 some of their descendants emigrated to South Dakota and later to Eugene, Oregon. In 1899, the Adolf Gerings, traveling in a covered wagon, ultimately reached their destination near Ritzville.¹¹

The earliest settlements in the Pacific Northwest by Black Sea Germans were made by people from the Liebental and Beresan colonies near Odessa, Russia and by Bessarabian Germans. About 1890 Evangelical Black Sea Germans were settling in the Big Bend grain belt from Ralston north to Ritzville and Odessa.¹² At the same time Catholic Black Sea Germans were finding new opportunity in the orchards of the Yakima

valley near **Toppenish**, **Wapato**, and **Yakima**. Others settled in **Spokane**, **Tacoma**, and in Mount Angel, Oregon.¹³ **Beresan** colonists from **Worms** moved to lands near Eugene, Oregon in 1891 from **Delmont**, South Dakota while others who were originally from **Rohrbach** began arriving near **Marlin**, Washington as early as 1903.¹⁴ The **Beresan** colonies had been established northwest of **Odessa**, Russia between 1809 and 1810 by people predominately from the Palatinate, Alsace, and **Baden**.

Bessarabians from **Dennewitz** arrived in Portland in 1892 after a brief sojourn in **Delmont**, South Dakota and in 1901 other **Bessarabians** from **Teplitz**, **Basyrjamka**, and **Kulm** homesteaded in southeastern Grant County near **Ruff**, **Wheeler**, and **Warden**. Others from **Strasburg** began locating west of **Ritzville** about 1903/4.¹⁴ The Russian Germans expanded ... to the drier regions around **Lind**, **Quincy**, **Ephrata**, and **Page** in the early years following the turn of the century as immigration from Russia continued unabated until 1914. At about that time several **Bessarabian** families from **Kulm**, South Dakota settled near **Dryden** and **Cashmere** in the **Wenatchee** valley "the nation's leading apple-producing area."¹⁵ These **Bessarabians** were originally from those colonies located about fifty miles southwest of **Odessa**, Russia. They were founded between 1814 and 1842 by Germans who fled Poland following persecution there by the nobility.

The railroads were chiefly responsible for inducing the initial settlement of these Black Sea Germans in eastern Washington. Men could secure both labor and land from the railroad companies as they built the lines which would ultimately link the northwest's untapped agricultural wealth with the eastern markets. The completion of **James J. Hills** Great Northern transcontinental line in the Big Bend country in 1892 virtually bisected the Northern Pacific's previously completed service routes into the area, facilitating new settlement along the Great Northern's Crab Creek route at such newly platted sites as **Harrington**, **Mohler**, **Odessa**, **Krupp**, and **Wilson** Creek. Other names in that vicinity indicative of Russian German immigrant presence include **Batum**, **Schrag**, **Tiflis**, and **Moscow**.

In 1905 a group of **Liebental** colonists from **Gueldeendorf** and **Neuburg** settled in Whitman County. The **Liebental** colonies were located just west of **Odessa**, Russia and were founded between 1804 and 1806 during the reign of **Alexander I**. **Odessa** was one of Russia's leading port cities in the south, won from the Turks in 1792, and teemed with the activity of merchants and foreign traders dealing in Russia's finest wines, cloths, fruits, and spices. The **Liebentalers** who settled in Washington's Whitman County were the families of **Peter Uhl**, **John** and **Jacob Stueckle**, and **Phillip Broeckel**. These had all emigrated to **Eureka**, South Dakota about 1887 under **Peter Uhl**. In 1904, one of **Uhl's** sons-in-law, **Rev. Henry Vogler** received a call to the Congregational Church in **Endicott**, Washington and both families relocated there the same year.¹⁶ **Uhl** then suggested that the other members of his family in **Eureka** come out to investigate the possibility of settlement in the Northwest. They concurred and, after a brief scouting trek, brought out their families in March, 1905 in a chartered railroad car. The group eventually purchased nine quarter-sections of land between **Cofax** and **LaCrosse** near **Dusty** for twenty-eight dollars per acre.¹⁷ Many Russian Germans from **Odessa**, Russia and the neighboring **Liebental** colonies continued to settle in eastern Washington, some of the earliest coming from the Midwest although later arrivals often made direct connections from **Odessa**, Russia. By 1920, the total number of Black Sea Germans in the three northwest states reached 10,305. A nearly equal number of **Volga** Germans, 10,925, were living in the Pacific Northwest at that same time and together these Russian German groups constituted more than one-quarter of all foreign-born residents in the eastern Washington counties of **Adams**, **Whitman**, **Walla**, and **Grant**.¹⁸

Russian German immigration to the Pacific Northwest was first undertaken by **Volga** Germans. It is the exploits of these pioneer families which we will celebrate in 1981 on the centennial of Russian German settlement in the American West. In the often repeated story of the original trek to the broad **Volga** steppes, thousands of Germans, from **Hesse** and the **Rhineland** responded between 1764 and 1767 by establishing 104 villages near **Saratov** on the middle **Volga** river. After a difficult period of adjustment these too generally prospered on both the hilly west bank (*Bergseite*) and the eastern plains side (*Wiesenseite*). As their countrymen did so later in the Black Sea region, the **Volga** Germans maintained their German identity in the sea of **Slavs** and **Mongol** tribesmen. Although the colonies generally remained aloof from the political affairs of the Russian state, they too became alarmed at the 1871 repeal of the settlement terms originally granted by **Catherine the Great** for "eternal time." Many responded by immigrating to the **Americas** as early as 1874 when the grace period for universal military conscription was annulled by the Russian government.

Of the fourteen **Volga** German scouts selected to explore potential areas of settlement in the United States, one was **Franz Scheibel**, a schoolteacher in **Kolb** who was originally from **Messer**. Other Protestant delegates were from **Norka**, **Balzer**, and **Messer**. **Prairie grass** and a soil sample were retrieved to confirm

their optimistic report upon their return to the Volga as was technical information regarding the various modes of transportation and land purchase. Franz Scheibel returned to America in August, 1876 aboard the S.S. *Donau* along with the families of Heinrich Bauer, Heinrich Kanzler, and Heinrich Rehn.¹⁹ This group eventually settled in Franklin County in southeast Nebraska and founded the village of Campbell. The settlement expanded in 1878 when a number of families who had crossed the Atlantic on the S.S. *Wieland* in May arrived from villages on the *Bergseite*. Passengers on this voyage would form the other major segment of what is termed the "Nebraska Colony," one of the two main groups of Volga Germans who first immigrated to the Pacific Northwest. Families aboard the S.S. *Wieland* transport included, from Kolb, those of Frederick Rosenoff, Jacob Thiel, and his sons George and Johannes, and from Frank, the Conrad Kiehns and Heinrich Amen. Additional families on the same trip include Heimbigners (Norka and Frank), Schosslers (Walter), Hoffs (Prank), Mullers (Kolb), Dewalds (Hussenbach) and others.²⁰

It was decided in 1879 that prospects for expansion would be greater for the colony in the southwest portion of the state although the climate in that area is semiarid.²¹ Nevertheless, they filed on homesteads in Hitchcock County near Culbertson and moved in May, living in soddies by the fork of the Republican and Frenchman rivers. In addition to raising livestock, they also harvested crops there as well as on their acreage in Franklin County. Large gardens provided a variety of vegetables and melons while wild fruits grew abundantly along the river. Unfortunately their contentment was again short-lived as much to their dismay it was soon learned that they had located near the Western Cattle Trail, a major thoroughfare for the Texas longhorn herds which were annually driven up to the northern markets. Their fields and gardens were overrun by the animals and a disastrous drought cycle began on the Great Plains in the early 1880's. This led many to consider yet another region which would become their ultimate destination, a move being contemplated simultaneously by a group of Russian Germans in Kansas. The place was America's Pacific Northwest.

The other group of Volga Germans who journeyed to Washington in 1882 were people from the Jeruslan River on the *Wiesenseite* who had settled in central Kansas in the 1870's. This "Kansas Colony" had located on lands along the border of Barton and Rush Counties. The first of this group settled near Great Bend in 1875, having arrived in November on the S.S. *Ohio*. These included the families of Henry Scheuermann, two Conrad Scheuermanns, George Brach, and Peter Ochs.²² They were soon joined by Henry and Phillip Green and the Henry Rothes, all of whom had arrived on a transport of the S.S. *City of Montreal* in January, 1876.²³ The Greens were originally from Norka but had relocated to her daughter colony of Rosenfeld; likewise the others were from daughter colonies along the Jeruslan River—Schonfeld, Schontal, and Neu Jagodnaja. Prior to moving to these villages, the Rothes had lived in Frank, the Scheuermanns in Jagodnaja Poljana and the Ochs and Brachs in Pobotschnaja.²⁴ In the fall of 1876 the Kansas Colony was joined by others from the *Wiesenseite* who had arrived in October aboard the S.S. *Mosel*. These included the families of Johannes, Heinrich, and Phillip Brach; Christian, Johannes, and Phillip Kleweno; Henry Litzenberger; Henry Repp; Phillip, Johannes, Johann Phillip, and Peter Ochs and Johannes, Heinrich, Peter, George, and Adam Scheierrmann.²⁵ Intermarriage solidified relationships between the pioneer families who often lived in isolated areas of the Kansas plains to form a close-knit group that would soon migrate to the Pacific Northwest.

The Kansas colony suffered considerably from the effects of the grasshopper plagues in the late 1870's. Particularly from 1875 to 1877, massive hordes of these insects so infested the fields and air that the Germans were left with little seed to replant. They also noted frightening electrical storms (to which they had not been accustomed in Russia) which were often accompanied by devastating tornadoes.²⁶ One informant seriously related an Oz-like fantasy in which a cyclone was said to have taken a small lake and team of horses from a Rush County homestead which his father, after he came out of his root cellar, attempted to find. Enroute to town he found the road leading into a new lake and nearby the two horses stood—still harnessed and unharmed.²⁷

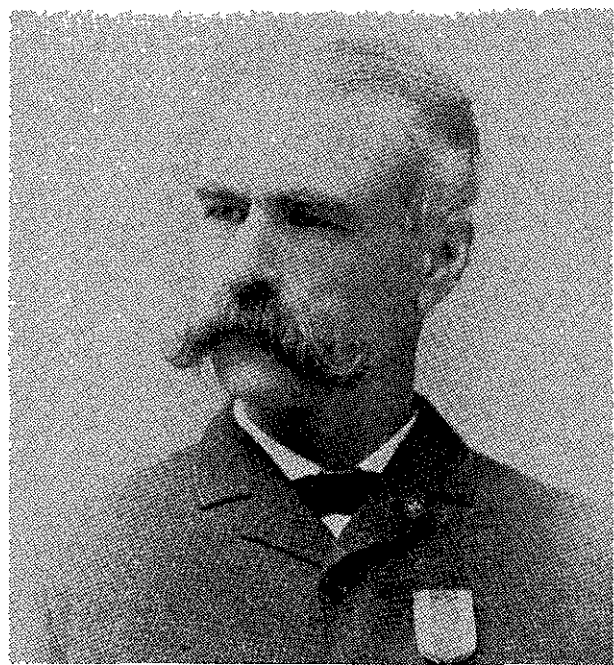
Increasingly becoming a subject of discussion among disgruntled immigrant groups in the Midwest was the possibility of settlement in the Pacific Northwest. Americans who had worked in the Oregon Country on the Pacific coast railways surveys had returned east and related to some the fertility and beauty of the region. Furthermore, the blossoming transportation companies of that area soon began an intensive advertising campaign to promote the development of what was being termed the "Great Columbia Plain." As had been the case earlier in American railroad history, a vast source of unskilled labor was needed in construction, and officials again turned to immigrants. Various railroad companies formed associations offering reduced rates to those who would travel westward to settle while guaranteeing employment until such arrangements were possible. The Union Pacific, Northern Pacific, Oregon Steamship Company, and others

were particularly interested in encouraging the development of Northwest resources in order to profit not only from passenger service but the anticipated shipment of industrial and agricultural commodities.

The program launched by Henry Villard, President of the NPRR, to induce settlement in the Pacific Northwest east of the Cascades bore fruit among many immigrants in the Midwest, including the Volga Germans. In the case of the Kansas colony in Rush and Barton Counties and the Nebraska colony in Hitch-cock County, frustration was particularly evident for reasons enumerated previously. In both places a segment of these groups elected to emigrate, the former in 1881 and the latter in 1882. The Kansas party²⁸ took advantage of reduced fares over the Union Pacific line and traveled to San Francisco where steamers of Villard's Oregon Steamship Company transported them to Portland. The group included the families of George and his son Phillip Green, Peter and Henry Ochs and the four Schierman brothers—John, Conrad, Henry, and George.²⁹ In Portland some labored on the construction of the huge Albina fill while others worked at a local lumber mill.



Phillip Green, leader of the Kansas colony which settled in Whitman County, Washington in 1882.



Thomas R. Tannatt, President of the Oregon Improvement Company, a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific Railroad, who was responsible for directing Russian German settlers to eastern Washington.

Their intention remained, however, to settle on prime farmland and, finding the surrounding forested areas unsuitable for this purpose, they were directed to officials of the Portland office of the Oregon Improvement Company to explore the possibilities of settlement east of the Cascades. Having just completed the purchase from the Northern Pacific of the odd sections in fourteen townships in the Palouse country totaling 150,000 acres, a scouting party was selected to view the area. Both Phillip Green and Peter Ochs were fluent in English and so were selected to go with others on the tour. The Walla Walla *Weekly Statesman* noted their activities through a letter of May 11, 1881 received from Agent R. W. Mitchell of the Oregon Improvement Company's Colfax Office of the Land Department:

Five locating agents of the Kansas colony, composed of about 70 families, passed through here Thursday on their way to inspect lands of the O.I. Co. Col. Tustin is in charge of the party. They look like solid, progressive farmers, such as we are willing to welcome to our broad acres. One of them remarked, "if the land is anything like what we've seen around Dayton, I guess we can be suited. We are surprised and delighted at what we have seen." Mr. Mitchell of the O. I. Co. will meet this party in the Palouse Country next week.³⁰

Writing from Dayton to Villard's office, Thomas R. Tannatt, President of the O. I. Co., relayed his intentions for dealing with the group in a note on May 10: "I want to sell them a township and will on Mr. Oakes' return if there is any trade with them."³¹ Indeed, the vanguard returned favorably impressed with

the area and Tannatt planned to meet them in Portland in order to arrange the sale.^{3 2} However, he found them reluctant to enter into such a massive bargain on behalf of the others in Kansas and it was not until the fall of the following year that members of this Portland group moved on company lands in Whitman County, and by that time a contingent of the Nebraska colony had arrived in Walla Walla.

Some Volga Germans of the Nebraska colony had considered moving to Washington Territory as early as 1880. In that year the group at Culbertson had written to J. E. Shepherd, the immigration agent of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company in San Francisco and the letter was forwarded to Villard himself. In it the farmers indicated their discontent with conditions in the Midwest:

I am the Russian interpreter of our colony and am instructed by the Father of the colony to write inquiring about the country of Washington Territory. We are one hundred and sixty families strong, and our reason for leaving here is that the wheat crop has failed here for three years past, and the indications are strong for another drought, as we have had no rain since last September and the cattle here are in bad way for want of grass, which is very scarce; and the people here are all leaving. We live on the open prairies and the heavy winds that prevail here are unendurable. Our houses consist of "Dug Outs" and "Sod houses." Our people are all discouraged and homesick, but too far to go back to Russia, and we want to see ... the Territory we have heard so much of its great yielding wheat fields and wonderful Fruit Country. We understand the Navigation Company has Rail Road land for sale. There are 160 families here, and 70 families in Clay Co. this state, and 100 families coming from Russia this fall, I think we can locate 230 families there this fall and winter. We are desirous of seeing this country first, and our minister Mr. Kansler and myself wish to go out and see the country. And we wish to know whether you can furnish passes for two persons out and one to come back and head the colony. We are a good, honest, straightforward, hard working class of people, and the colony also instructs me to state that the two passes will be paid back to the Company after they are located, so as to be sure of our honesty of intention . . . ,³³

Despite their appeal and favorable response, the families remained in Nebraska and it was not until two years later that they decided to immigrate to the Pacific Northwest. In May, 1882, a number of these Volga German families boarded a train at North Platte, Nebraska, enroute to Ogden, Utah, on the Union Pacific's transcontinental line.³⁴ The value of having its own direct connections to the Oregon country had become increasingly evident to the Union Pacific with the developing economy of the region. For this purpose it had incorporated the Oregon Short Line in 1879, to run from Granger, Wyoming, along the route of the old Oregon Trail to a connection with Villard's O.R. & N. Co. on the Columbia at Umatilla. The line was not completed until 1884 and men of the Nebraska colony were given temporary employment on its construction from American Falls, Idaho, to Pendelton. They formed a train of forty wagons at Ogden, Utah and lumbered north on the California Trail until they reached the Oregon Trail near the headwaters of the Snake River.

The group chose Frederick Rosenoff to be a wagonmaster and they traveled from American Falls through Boise and Baker enroute to Walla Walla.³⁵ Memories of the 1876 Custer Massacre and 1878 Bannock Indian War were still fresh in the minds of many area residents and Henry Oestreich and George H. Kanzler were selected to serve as scouts for the party. Without a pair of oxen to pull his wagon, Conrad Wolsborn, a shoemaker in his native Frank, fashioned a special harness uniting both horse and ox. Also in preparation for the trip, the women had sewn garden seeds into clothing to ensure good plantings in their new home.

The caravan encountered the usual hazards associated with pioneer travel, enduring intense heat on dusty trails which often led through areas infested with rattlesnakes. Marie Thiel, wife of John, went into confinement in Baker, giving birth on April 10, 1882, to twins, only one of whom, Jacob, survived. They entrusted their earnings from work on the railroad to a former Nebraska sheriff who accompanied them but near the end of the journey he absconded with the funds.

However, they remained steadfast in their faith, never traveling on Sundays but, rather, gathered their wagons into a large circle and held worship services with an elder reading the lessons in German.³⁶ Upon arrival in Pendelton some members of the party decided to go on to Portland although most continued north to Walla Walla, the first wagons rolling in late in the summer of 1882. They decided to winter in Walla Walla while investigating the various possibilities of settlement in the region.

Some of the men found employment on farms in the area, others contracted to haul rock in the construction of the territorial penitentiary. One of the Thiels was hired by Phillip Ritz, a successful Walla Walla farmer and businessman, to dig fence-post holes on his property near Ritzville. In addition to other extensive realties in the territory, Ritz had acquired 5,000 acres near Ritzville from the railroad in 1878.

Finding that Ritz paid well for his labor, Thiel decided to continue working at Ritzville and Ritz encouraged him and his companions to settle on lands nearby.³⁷ The town of Ritzville was named in his honor, platted with others on that section of the N.P. line in 1881. At the same time he was awarded contracts by the railroad to plant maple, chestnut, locust, and other trees along its tracks from Ainsworth to Ritzville, a project Ritz embarked on as much from an experimental standpoint as financial. The *Walla Walla Statesman* optimistically predicted the results based on Ritz's earlier experience as, "those planted last year are thrifty . . . The experiment gave emphatic denial to the theory that the sandy soil was unproductive."³⁸

Only days earlier the newspaper also reported on the progress of the Kansas colony from Portland:

Kansas Colony-Gen. Tannatt is in receipt of a letter today from Phillip Greene, the agent of the Kansas colony, stating that these people would be at Texas Ferry in a day or so, and asking for several four-horse teams to convey them to Plainville [a point between Colfax and Endicott]. Mr. Greene states that he wrote home setting forth the fact that the land, climate and general outlook of this country, was all that could be desired. He writes Gen. Tannatt that three other Kansas colonies have sent inspectors or agents with the present party, who are to locate land for other coming immigrants. There is to be an exodus from Kansas this fall.³⁹

Phillip Green, Henry Litzenberger, Peter and Henry Ochs, and the Schierman brothers were determined to locate on suitable farmland and their previous expedition to the Palouse Hills reminded them of the terrain back on the Volga *Bergseite*. Tannatt's Oregon Improvement Company provided their fares over the O.R.&N. Co. line as far as Texas Ferry or Almota. Peter and Henry Ochs then walked over twenty miles to Endicott, enlisting the aid of Henry D. Smith and J. T. Person to procure wagons for transporting the families and belongings.⁴⁰

Carrying the pioneer necessities, the Phillip Green family traveled from Portland in a covered wagon drawn by several mules. Leaving on a warm morning late in September, they followed the Emigrant Road and soon began ascending the Cascades. On the other side of the pass it began snowing and raining with such intensity that the wagon and occupants were soon drenched. After traveling north for a time out of Walla Walla the weary settlers finally reached their destination, about four miles east of Endicott, on October 12, 1882.⁴¹



Palouse Colony, Whitman County, Washington established by Volga Germans from Kansas in 1882.

Phillip Green fashioned an earthen home in a hillside on his farm, similar to the *zemlyanki* dug by the first German colonists on the Volga, and Indians were blamed for stealing his horses shortly after their arrival.⁴² Enduring a difficult winter, he hauled lumber from Colfax the following spring and built a four-room house.⁴³ Together with others he went to work on the construction of the Palouse line, some accompanied by their families who lived in tents. The rails reached Colfax in 1883 and grading continued toward Pullman and Moscow.⁴⁴

One million acres of potential crop land were said to be within the revised 1883 boundary of Whitman County which conforms to its present shape. It presently leads the nation in average dry-land grain yields. The settlers from Kansas were anxious to establish a colony and, shortly after his arrival in the Palouse, one of the Schierman brothers, Conrad, rode on horseback north from Endicott to explore the surrounding countryside.⁴⁵ Waves of knee-high, tawny bunchgrass blew in the breeze across the broad hills and after riding about five miles, he came to the crest of a massive basaltic bluff overlooking the Palouse river valley. Finding it too steep to travel down, he followed the river's course upstream until he came to a more gentle slope near its northernmost point in that area. Descending here and riding back a short distance to the expanse spied earlier, he found a beautiful tableland bordered on the west by the river and sheltered on the east by the steep, rocky bluffs. He returned to the railroad camp and shared the news of his discovery with the other families who proceeded to investigate the site together and, being equally satisfied, they traveled to the federal land office in Colfax to arrange the sale. Their request was rather unorthodox since it was their intention to collectively purchase the quarter-section of land on the river.⁴⁶ However it was divided accordingly, which reflected the *mir* model to which they had been accustomed in Russia.

Members of the Nebraska colony, who had wintered in Walla Walla after their arrival in the fall of 1882, continued at various means of livelihood while investigating various options for collective settlement in the area. A portion of the colony including Dewalds, Schoesslers, Schaefer, Heimbigners, and others decided to remain in Walla Walla which was blossoming into a major trade center for the region. In 1888 the city already had a population of 3,588 and a visitor that year reported:

The people were bright, intelligent and pleasant to meet, but not without the ambitious and progressive natures of other places we had visited. The feeling of self-satisfaction, possessing the thought that Walla Walla was the hub of the universe, was like the old feeling of the Bostonian for his beloved Boston.⁴⁷

In the final stage of their quest for land, a large segment of the Nebraska colony was induced to settle near Ritzville. Traveling in wagons from Walla Walla on the Colville Road to Ritzville through the spring of 1883, the historic party included the families of Henry Amen, Sr., Mrs. Holfrich Bauer, Henry Kanzler, Sr., Conrad Kiehn, Henry Miller, Frederick Rosenoff, Jacob Thiel, Sr., and Conrad Wolsborn.⁴⁸ The April 1882 issue of *The West Shore*, an early regional magazine, noted that the land around Ritzville "is rapidly being settled upon now, though the general opinion until last fall was that it was of little value for agriculture. Mr. Ritz and a few others have practically demonstrated that the idea was erroneous. . . The roads leading into the Big Bend are dotted with emigrant wagons."⁴⁹

The Volga German families located on half sections about five miles northwest of the town but the men had to make a three-day Journey to Colfax to file their claims. Most homesteaded while others purchased railroad land or drew timber culture claims on the treeless prairies. The loam was dark and rich in that area but without lumber they also had to live in dugouts, using sagebrush and cow dung for fuel. Through efficient methods of tillage and fallowing, the industrious farmers achieved remarkable success. "Good houses, orchards, windbreaks, and windmills [soon] made them a distinctive island in the semi-arid pioneer landscape of Adams County."⁵⁰

Of those remaining in Walla Walla, a small group led by John C. Oestreich moved in 1884 to the Horse Heaven country near Bickleton in Klickitat County. Again traveling by wagons, this party also included the families of Jacob Bastrom, George Jacob Dewald, John F. Kembed, Henry F. Michel, and Conrad Schaeffer. Wild horses ranged in large herds throughout the area and the settlers often traded for them with the neighboring Klickitat Indians. Most of the men filed on homesteads and raised livestock; many were joined later by relatives; other early Volga German settlers there being the Schoesslers, Heimbigners, and Ekhardt. Some who went to Klickitat County, including the John F. Kembels and Henry Oestreichs, relocated to Ritzville about 1890 as Volga German settlement there was rapidly expanding into the Marcellus district and southeast of Odessa.⁵¹

Recurrent streams of immigrants responded to newly opened regions and by 1888 Ritzville had sufficiently developed for its residents to seek incorporation. A post office and store were opened the same year in Lind. In 1885 George Schmidt, a native of Prank, Russia, was given fare to Bellingham by the rail-

road and was among the earliest Volga Germans to arrive there. After the turn of the century a considerable Volga German nucleus formed in **Bellingham** with most of the men employed in the lumber mills. **Schmidt** decided, however, to join other Volga Germans in Walla Walla which, in the late 1880's, also experienced the continued influx of immigrants with such names as Fries, **Graedwohl**, and Schmidt, most from Walter and Frank, Russia. Over time many of them congregated in what became appropriately known as "*die russische Ecke*," extending between Second and Fourth along **Morton**, Maple, and Malcolm Streets.^{5 2}



*Casper and Elizabeth Kulthau, early Portland residents from **Norka**, Russia.*

It will be recalled that **Phillip** Green's father, George Henry (originally from Norka), remained in Portland with his wife and others in 1882 while the rest of the colony journeyed to **Endicott**. Between 1888 and 1890 Portland witnessed a considerable influx of Volga Germans from **Balzer** and Frank. This was followed by an even larger movement of those from Norka between 1890 and 1895.⁵³ Many joined the earlier arrivals living in **Albina** which was incorporated into Portland in 1891.

The ward around Northeast Seventh Avenue and along Union Avenue from **Freemont** to Shaver Streets also became a "Little Russia." Among the earliest Volga German immigrants to the district were Conrad **Schwartz**, George and John **Betz**; Adam, Conrad, and **Constantine** Brill; Frank and Henry **Meier**; Adam and David **Schwind**; the Repps, **Popps**, and Millers,⁵⁴ As forests were cleared south of the city some moved in 1891 to **Canby**. In 1892 Catholic Volga Germans from **Semenowka** and **Koehler** began settling in Portland while others located in **Toppenish**, Washington.⁵⁵

In the late 1890's demand grew in the world market for soft winter wheat which was well adapted to the growing conditions in the inland Northwest. This factor, combined with the negative effects in Russia on the Russian Germans arising out of the previously detailed ukase of 1892 and recurrent crop failures prompted more to leave their homeland. During this decade an interesting corollary to greater northwest Volga German settlement began, a movement to Alberta, Canada, with the arrival of several families in the **Palouse** colony in 1891 including the Peter **Pfaffenroths**, Henry **B.** and Adam **Scheuermanns**, and Adam **Schmick**. This group had all departed their native colony of **Jagodnaja Poljana** for Kansas in the spring 1888 enduring together with other "**Yagaders**" the Atlantic voyage in April on the **S.S. Hungarie** from Hamburg to New York.⁵⁶

After spending three years in the vicinity of Florence and Newton, Kansas, some of them decided to join friends in Washington.⁵⁷ Emigrants arriving in Endicott from Jagodnaja Poljana in 1892 included several other **Pfaffenroths**, all brothers: Christian, Henry, George, and Conrad.⁵⁸ The summer of 1892 was particularly hot and dry, severely damaging the crops so Adam **Scheuermann**, who was renting a farm, resolved to personally investigate settlement possibilities in Canada where it was rumored good land was still open for sale at reasonable terms.

Although the Canadian Pacific Railroad had been completed in 1886, Scheuermann found it cheaper to Join four other men, not Volga Germans, in a long trek led by a prospector enroute to the **Kootenay goldfields** in the Canadian Rockies. **Scheuermann's** son, John, also accompanied the party as they loaded



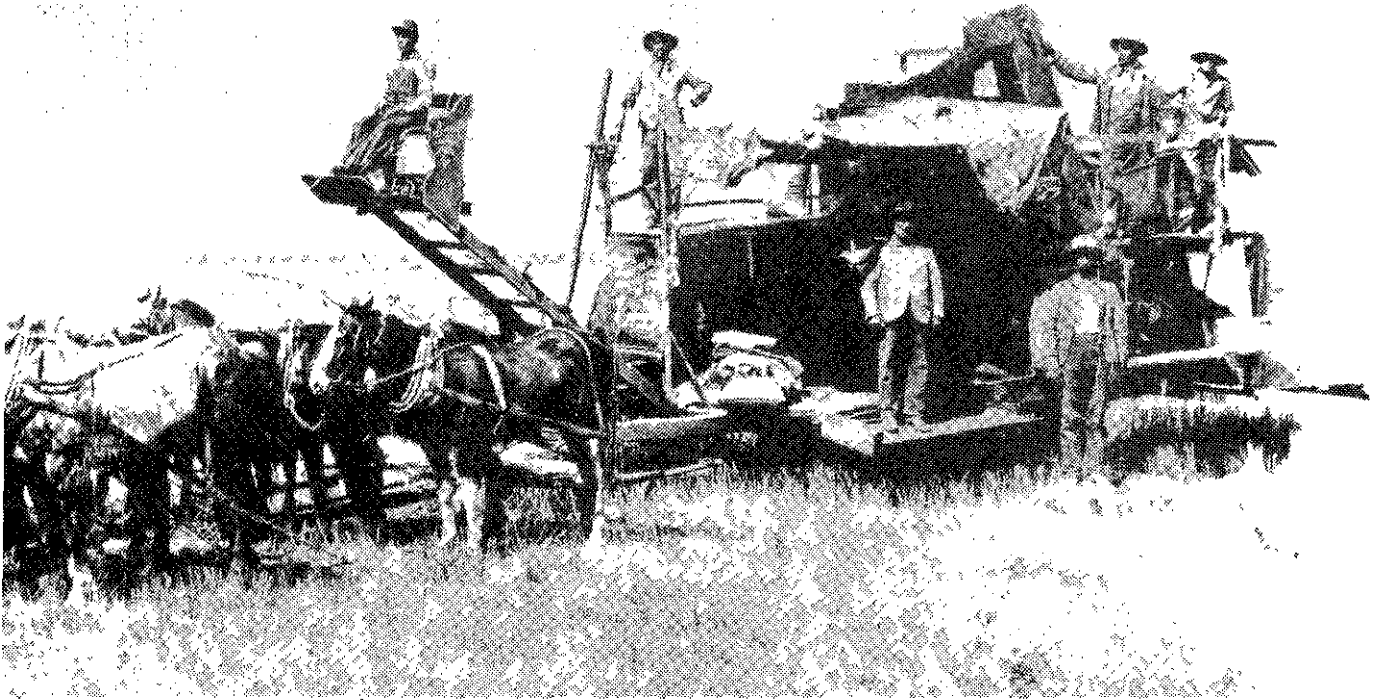
This picture of the S chafer-backer wheat threshing machine and crew was taken on August 7, 1909, at Odessa, Washington. Jacob Schafer, Sr. was the father-in-law to Jacob Wacker, Sr. The crew from left to right were Jacob Wacker, Jr., Jacob Schafer, Jr., on the header-puncher, Jacob Schafer, Sr., Jacob Wacker, Sr., Conrad Schafer and John Schafer. The two families joined in the purchase of the threshing equip-

his father's breaking plow into a wagon and set off with seven horses to points northward in what was intended to be a three week journey. Had they foreseen the struggles ahead an alternate route probably would have been chosen. The road they took led above Spokane into the rugged terrain of British Columbia and soon deteriorated into a rocky trail impassable for the wagon. Not to be defeated, they constructed a large raft to hold two of the men and the wagon while the Scheuermanns continued on horseback through the mountains, John testing the depths of the swollen currents for crossing with a rope tied to himself and anchored on shore.

After weeks of arduous travel and near drowning they finally emerged from the mountain wilderness at Banff, both horses and men facing starvation. They managed to meet the two men with the wagon and continued north to Wetaskiwin, Alberta, arriving six weeks after leaving Endicott. Scheuermann filed for a homestead on unsurveyed land thirty miles southeast of the town near the present site of Bashaw.⁵⁹ He went to work on the construction of the railroad between Edmonton and Calgary at fifty cents a day and, not wanting the rest of his family to endure the same trip, procured free passes for them on the railroad. They lived in a cave-like enclosure on the farm the first winter and subsisted largely on wild rabbits for meat.⁶⁰

The Henry Scheuermanns also arrived in 1892, homesteading a quarter section southwest of Red Deer Lake next to Adam's property. More adequate buildings were constructed the next year and a large influx of foreign immigration to the area began in 1894, much from the province of Volhynia in Russia though later settlers were also from the Volga.⁶¹ St. Peter's congregation was organized in 1897 under the auspices of the newly formed German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Manitoba and a beautiful country church was erected in 1903.

Volga German immigration to Calgary also hastened as the four Poffenroth brothers from Endicott— Christian, Henry, George, and Conrad together with John Geier and others moved there in 1894. Land was more readily available in Alberta where, under Canada's 1872 land law, one could secure title to 160 acres



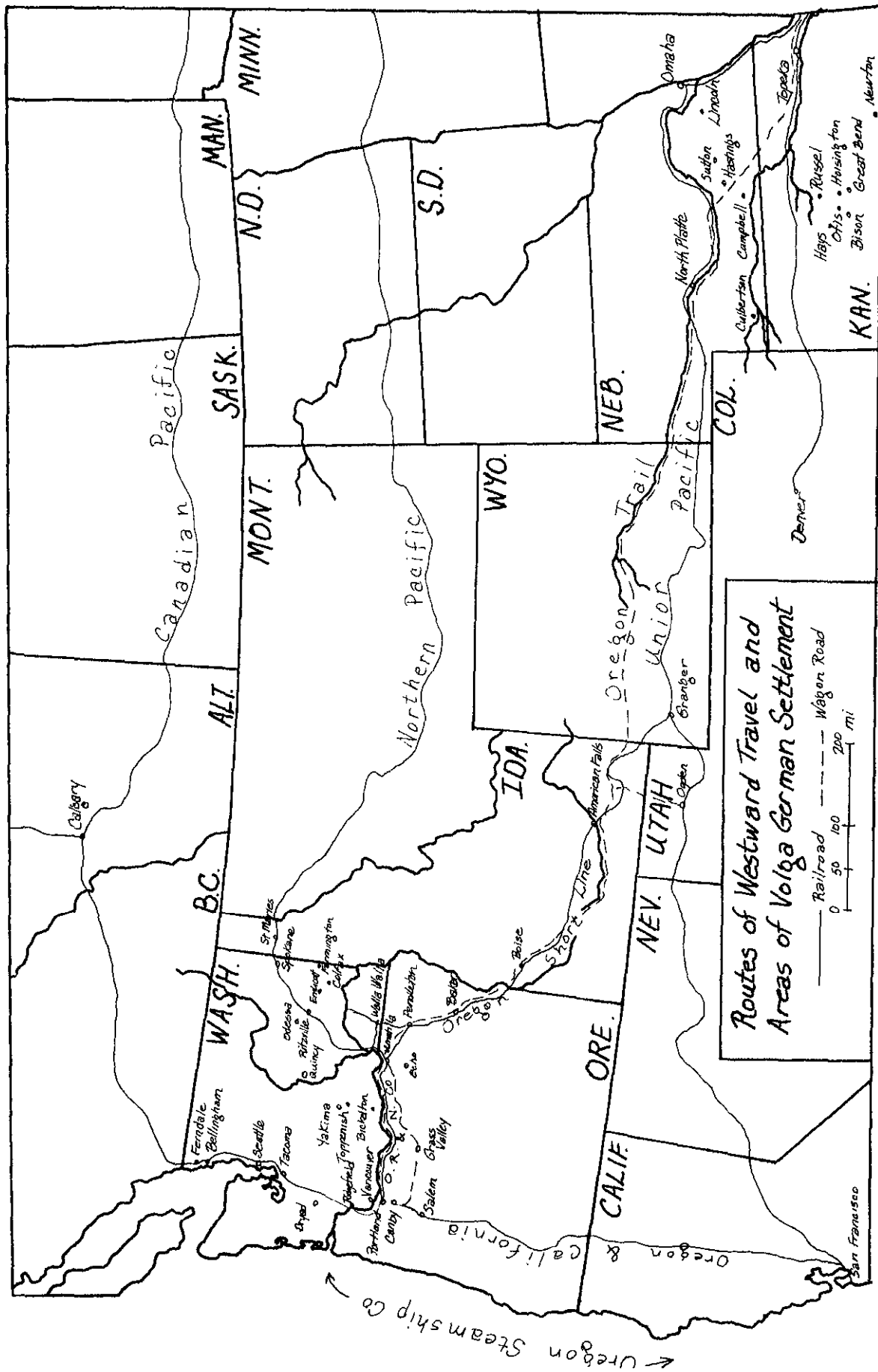
ment. AHSGR member Hannah (Wacker) Widmer is the daughter to Jacob Wacker, Sr., who came to Nebraska on April 10, 1892. The Schafer family also came to Nebraska and went to Odessa in 1901. This photograph is from the Henry J. Amen collection. Mrs. Amen came to this country from Frank, Russia with her brother, Jacob Wacker, Sr.

for a mere ten dollar registration fee and three years' residence. Plantings were confined to the spring due to the harsh winters and many found employment in the city. In 1902 they organized Emmanuel Lutheran Church in the Riverside area which became known as "Little Yagada" (after the mother colony Jagodnaja Poljana) and by 1913 it was estimated that nearly one thousand Germans were living in Calgary, most in the Riverside district.⁶² Many came direct from Russia through such Canadian ports of entry in the East as Halifax, Nova Scotia.

About the turn of the century Volga Germans from Kolb began settling in Tacoma where they found employment in sawmills and factories. Among the first to go there was George Miller, who had immigrated earlier to Hastings, Nebraska where he heard of the opportunities for work in the Pacific Northwest. He journeyed west about 1899 to Tacoma and was soon joined there by other Volga Germans from Kolb, many of whom had worked in the Ritzville area until the harvest season was over. Such early emigrants to Tacoma included Peter and John Jacob Koch, Peter Miller, and a Yukert family.

Later Volga German arrivals there were families named Achziger, Adier, Bauer, Meininger, Muench, Rehn, Reiber, Ruth, Thaut, Thorn, and Wilhelm. Although they were predominantly from Kolb, others also came from Prank, Hussenbach, Walter, and Donhoff.⁶³ This group established a beautiful neighborhood of white houses dotted with their churches, known as "Little Russia," between South nineteenth and Twenty-third Streets along Ainsworth, Cushman and Sheridan Avenues.⁶⁴

Meanwhile immigration, which had continued unabated to other points in the greater Northwest until 1914 when war broke out in Europe, decreased to an insignificant rate after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and Civil War in Russia, the victorious Bolsheviks later restricting travel over the borders. By 1920 Russian German immigration had reached throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and southern British Columbia and Alberta. Clearly, the Russian Germans had made a major impact in the region during the dynamic era of pioneer settlement, and continue today to play an integral role in the development of business and agriculture in the Pacific Northwest.



NOTES

1. From "*DieReis'diewar erzogen*", verse 4, translated by Nancy B. Holland, *AHSGR Work Paper* No. 20 (Spring 1976) p. 64.
2. Richard Sallet, *Russian-German Settlements in the United States*, (Fargo: North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1974), translated by LaVern J. Rippley and Armand Bauer, p. 112.
3. Albert Stukart, private interview, Lethbridge, Alberta, June 20, 1979.
4. Alan Brandmarker, "Hutterites Cling to Old Lifestyle—Except in Farming," *Wenatchee Daily World*, April 1, 1979, p. 1.
5. John A. Hostetler and Gertrude E. Huntington, *The Hutterites in North America*, (San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. 3.
6. Hostetler, p. 92.
7. Adam Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev: The Story of Russia's Germans*. (Battleford, Saskatchewan: Marian Press, 1974), p. 97.
8. Giesinger, p. 129.
9. "The Mennonites: Adams County's Second Largest Colony," *Ritzville Journal-Times Pioneer Edition*, September 15, 1949, p. 31.
10. "The Mennonites," p. 31.
11. Harm Schlommer, "Inland Empire Russia Germans," *The Pacific Northwestern*, VIII (Fall, 1964), p. 60.
12. Sallet, p. 41.
13. Sallet, p. 31.
14. David Hoefel, *The Hoefel Family Album*, (Newton, Kansas: The Mennonite Press, 1968), p. 13.
15. Richard D. Scheuerman, *Early Days in Old Mission: A History of the Cashmere Valley*. (Cashmere, Washington: The Cashmere Valley Record, 1976), p. 24.
16. J.A. Stueckle, *History and Record of the Stueckle Family*, 2nd Edition, 1978, p. 5.
17. Chris Stueckle, private interview, Colfax, Washington, June 15, 1979.
18. Sallet, p. 123. In Adams County, Russian-German population as a per cent of the total foreign born populace totalled 60%.
19. S.S. Donau Manifest (to New York, August 5, 1876).
20. S.S. Wieland Manifest (to New York, May 22, 1878).
21. Roy Oestreich, unpublished papers, Ritzville, Washington.
22. S.S. Ohio Manifest (to Baltimore, November 23, 1875).
23. S.S. City of Montreal Manifest (to New York, January 6, 1876).
24. Leta Ochs, private interview, Endicott, Washington, April 23, 1971 and *Autobiography of Peter Brach*, typescript copy from Laurin Wilhelm, Lawrence, Kansas.
25. S.S. Mosel Manifest (to New York, October 24, 1876).
26. *Endicott Index*, November 29, 1935.
27. Dave Schierman, private interview, Walla Walla, Washington, July 9, 1972.
28. Grace Lillian Ochs, *Up from the Volga: The Story of the Ochs Family* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1969), p. 26; Mrs. Karl L. Scheuerman, private interview, Endicott, Washington, June 8, 1975; and Mrs. Letz Ochs, private interview, Endicott, Washington, April 23, 1971.
29. Ochs, p. 36-38.
30. Letter, R. W. Mitchell, Colfax, Washington Territory to Thomas R. Tannatt, Portland, Oregon, May 10, 1881.
31. Letter, Tannatt, Dayton, W.T. to Villard, May 10, 1881.
32. Notation by Tannatt on Mitchell letter, forwarded to Villard, May 11, 1881.
33. Letter, Carl Brobst, interpreter at Culbertson, Hitchcock County, Nebraska to J. E. Shepherd O.R.&N. Co., San Francisco, California, May 10, 1880; quoted in James Blaine Hedges, *Henry Villard and the Railways of the Northwest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), p. 124.
34. Roy Oestreich file.
35. *Ritzville Journal-Times*, "Adams County Pioneer Edition," September 15, 1949; Ruth J. Thiel, "Memories of my Father," unpublished typescript and Roy Oestreich file.

The following listing includes the family heads in the wagon train and their native Volga colonies. Many had married sons who also brought their families. See Oestreich file for family members.

Johann G. Adier, Kolb	Henry F. Michel, Alt Messer
Henry Amen, Sr., Frank	Henry Miller, Kolb
Jacob Bastrom, Frank	Johann C. Oestreich, Neu Messer
Mrs. Holfrich Bauer, Sr., Kolb	Frederick Rosenoff, Kolb
George Jacob Dewald, Hussenbach	Jacob Schaefer, Frank
Conrad Heimbigner, Frank	Jacob Schloessler, Walter
Henry Kanzler, Sr., Kolb	Jacob Thiel, Sr., Kolb
John F. Kembel, Kolb	Jacob Wagner, Frank
Conrad Kiehn, Frank	Conrad Wolsborn, Frank

Additional participants in the journey may have included Schnells (Kolb), Hoffs (Frank), and other Volga Germans.

36. *Ritzville Journal Times*, "Adams County Pioneer Edition," September 15, 1949, pp. 1-3.
37. Roy Oestreich file. Ritz was originally from Pennsylvania, born in Lancaster County in 1827. He came west during the California gold rush but in 1850 moved to Winchester Bay, Oregon after reading about strikes along the Umpqua river. Instead, all he found were Indians and dense forests so he turned to trapping. He went north to Canada's Fraser river gold district in 1858. Four years later he opened a tree nursery in Walla Walla which developed into a profitable enterprise and later acquired extensive land holdings. He died in 1889.
38. *Walla Walla Statesman*, October 4, 1882, p. 1.
39. *Walla Walla Statesman*, September 30, 1882, p. 3.
40. *Endicott Index*, August 16, 1935 and Ochs, p. 41. The Henry Dayton Smiths were the first permanent settlers in the Endicott area. Smith filed a homestead and timber claim in 1878 on land just west of the future townsite and moved there from Walla Walla in the fall of 1879. Smith's wife, Jenny, was the daughter of Major and Mrs. R. H. Wimpy who had come west in a wagon train after the Civil War. The Smith home near Endicott became known as the Half-way House due to its location between Walla Walla and Spokane and they provided lodging and meals for freighters and other travelers. When the Oregon Improvement Company began surveying operations along Rebel Flat in July, 1880, the local agent, John Courtright, arranged for employee accommodations at the Half-way House. Jefferson T. Person also arrived in the summer of 1880 and later in the year opened the first store in the community.
41. *Endicott Index*, November 29, 1935, p. 1.
42. Possibly by members of the Palouse bands who once owned huge herds along the lower Snake River but were defeated by Colonel George Wright in the Interior Indian Wars of 1855-58. In the 1880's they consisted of a few hundred individuals who were too proud to go to the reservation,
43. *Endicott Index*, December 6, 1935, p. 1.
44. Enoch A. Bryan, *Orient Meets Occident: The Advent of the Railways to the Pacific Northwest* (Pullman, Washington: The Student Book Corporation, 1936), p. 163.
45. Dave Schierman, private interview, Walla Walla, Washington, July 9, 1972. 46- This being the northwest corner of Section 9, Township 17N., Range 41 E.W.M., see *Whitman County Auditor Reports, 1885-1890*.
47. Carrie Adell Strahor, *Fifteen Thousand Miles by Stage* (New York. 1911), pp. 304-5.
48. *Ritzville Journal Times*, "Adams County Pioneer Edition," September 15, 1949.
49. Roy Oestreich file, newspaper clipping quoting *The West Shore*, April, 1883.
50. Donald William Meining, "Environment and Settlement in the Palouse, 1869-1910," (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Washington, 1950), p. 339. For an extensive sociological study on the Russian Germans in the Ritzville area, see Elmer Miller, "The European Background and Assimilation of a Russian-German Group," (unpublished M.A. Thesis, State College of Washington, 1960).
51. Roy Oestreich file,
52. Jean Roth, unpublished papers, Seattle, Washington and Mr. and Mrs. George Gradwohl, Jr., private interview, Walla Walla, Washington, March 18, 1978.
53. Sallet, p. 48.
54. Wanda June Schwabauer, "The Portland Community of Germans from Russia," unpublished typescript, May, 1974, pp. 18, 25, 33.
55. Sallet, pp. 48, 61.
56. S.S. Hungarie Passenger List (to New York, April 27, 1888).
57. Mrs. Elizabeth Repp, private interview, Endicott, Washington, April 1, 1977.
58. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Poffenroth, private interview, Calgary, Alberta, July 5, 1977.
59. *Mecca Glen Memories* (Ponoka, Alberta: Mecca Glen Centennial Committee, 1968), pp. 223-25, quoting Henry Scheuerman interview.
60. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Scheuerman, private interview, Bashaw, Alberta, July 1, 1977.
61. *Mecca Glen Memories*, pp. 222, 225.
62. *The Calgary Herald*, May 25, 1957, p. 7.
63. Jacob Meininger, Jacob Miller, and Jacob Rehn, private interviews, Tacoma, Washington, April 4, 1978,
64. Dale Wirsing, *Builders, Brewers and Burghers: Germans of Washington State*, (Washington State American Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 40.

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

FUNDRAISING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Don C. Vowel

When railroads, being completed in the new world, sent emissaries to recruit immigrants for the land holdings along their lines, Germans from Russia flocked to this new "promised land." The hardships they faced were beyond description. The climate was harsh. Roads were **nonexistent**. Doctors and hospitals were out of reach. Crop failure was commonplace. Many were swindled. Their faith in God, their initiative and honesty earned respect and admiration, and their **perseverance** paid off.

Today Germans from Russia stand at the top of the list in every profession or occupation they have entered. Their faith, honesty, cleanliness and industry have earned the title "Outstanding Citizen."

They Deserve A Living Memorial

Let us build a fitting structure to house the history, genealogy, folklore, artifacts, tools, furniture, pictures, etc., that proclaim the memory of these great people who did so much to shape the destiny of the new world. When a loved one, a friend, or a respected member of the community passes on, let us make a memorial gift to the Foundation, designated for this purpose.

More knowledge has been revealed to mankind during our lifetime that during all previous **millenniums** man has been on earth. We live in a remarkable age. Electricity, telephone, automobile, airplanes, radio, television, space travel. Skill, talent, knowledge and resources of Germans from Russia have been contributing factors.

Individual and collective contributions of considerable amounts are needed plus grants from other foundations whose purpose is preservation of ethnic history. The response to the appeal to Chapters to conduct **fundraising** projects has been less than gratifying. Perhaps the lack of a popular goal has accounted for this. The Headquarters Project should provide this goal.

The Foundation will accept pledges for monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual contributions, plus gifts of **uni-trusts**, of \$25,000.00, or more, with a negotiated annuity, during the lifetime of donor or spouse. Also, remember the Foundation in your will and notify the Foundation of your action.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE OF THE AHSGR INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Nominating Committee is submitting the following candidates for a three-year term on the Board of Trustees of the International Foundation.

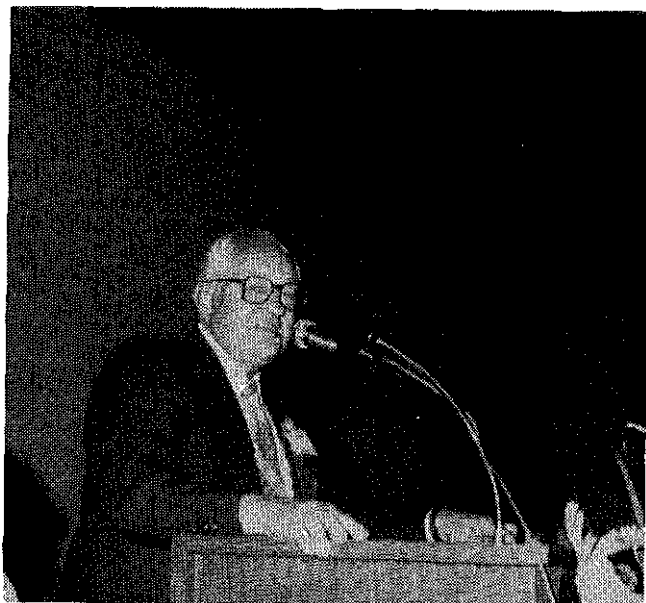
Alexander **Dupper**, Lodi, California
Ralph L. **Giebelhaus**, Lincoln, Nebraska
Lester Harsh, **McCook**, Nebraska
Gordon L. **Schmidt**, **Henderson**, Nebraska
Jake Sinner, Lincoln, Nebraska

Alexander Dupper, Chairman
Mrs. Norman **Dudek** (absent)
Mrs. Theodore **E. Heinz**
Miss Ruth **K. Stoll**

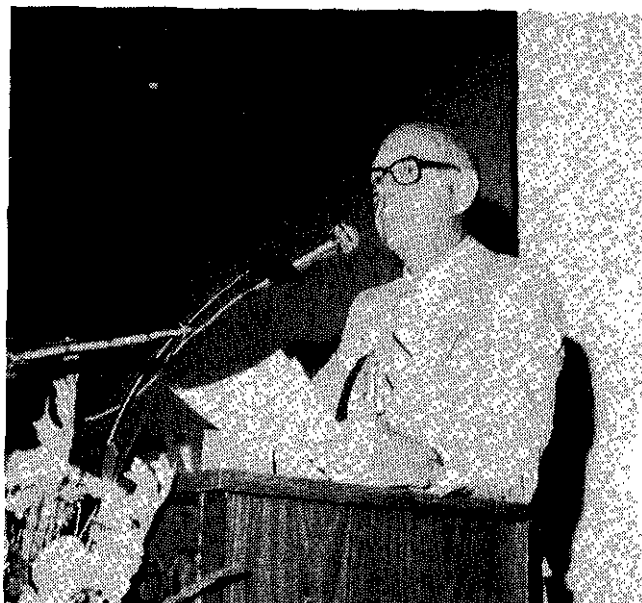
Editor's Note: The above nominees were elected by unanimous ballot at the business meeting during the Foundation luncheon. Later, at a meeting of the Board of Trustees, the following officers were elected to service during the coming year:

Gordon L. **Schmidt**, President
Don C. Vowel, Vice-President
Dr. Solomon **R. Schneider**, Secretary
Edward **Schwartzkopf**, Treasurer

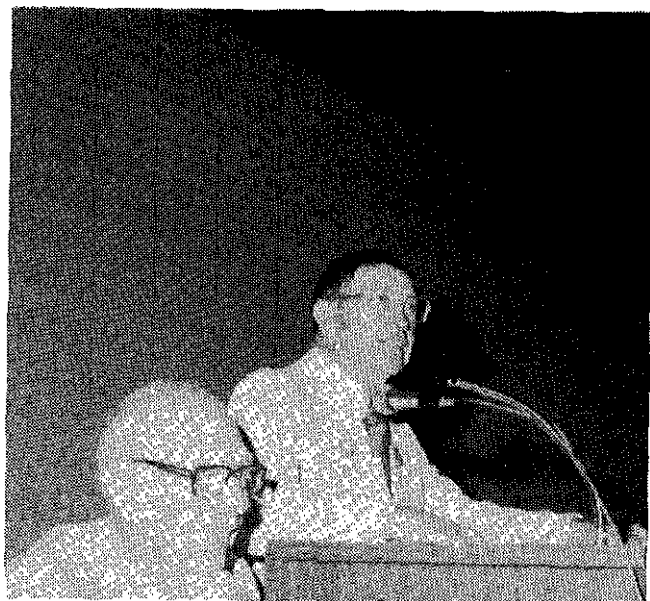
FOUNDATION PERSONALITIES



Don C. Vowel, Fundraising Chairman



Gordon L. Schmidt, President



Edward Schwartzkopf, Building Committee Chairman



Solomon R. Schneider, Secretary

**A REPORT ON THE GRANTS AWARDED BY THE AHSGR
INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION DURING 1978-1979**

Reuben Goertz

True or False?

A specialist is one who learns more and more about less and less until he knows everything about nothing. If the specialists research is laced with a bit of AHSGR foundation funding, the obvious answer is a resounding-**FALSE!**

A quick review of the four projects funded in whole or in part with your foundation funds shows a phenomenal growth in scope and diversity. Most have grown from modest beginnings to impressive ventures in research, reaching far beyond their original intent.

One man in Oklahoma researches his maternal grandmother's genealogy. Nothing about this sets him apart from the rest of us in similar pursuits, until one of the threads he is unraveling leads him to a copy of *Der Sendbote* in the possession of a relative. *Der Sendbote* is the German language American Baptist newspaper. The American Baptist Historical Society and Library in Rochester, N.Y. is the repository of these publications of the last 118 years. One can only speculate how many of the obituaries published in those many pages are of Germans from Russia. Even when initial optimism is tempered with good old German caution a list of over 24,000 obituaries is suggested.

For \$779.75 of our foundation money, John Butler in *Stillwater*, Oklahoma, will research the 60 rolls of microfilm that contain the 1853-1930 issues and then go to Rochester N.Y. to study the bound volumes that contain the subsequent issues. As he picks his way through these copies he will compile an alphabetized index of the collection and Xerox the obituaries of our people, trim the copies, paste them on 5 by 8 cards, cross reference the maiden names and turn them over to AHSGR's Obituary Card Collection.

For a modest outlay of foundation funds and a prodigious amount of John Butler's time, John surely gets to know his maternal grandmother better but AHSGR gets this vast number of obituaries for our files *plus* the copyright to the index.

Another state, another young man, intrigued by the richness of his heritage starts to delve in a rather parochial manner. His interest is not confined to a maternal grandmother but rather extends to all the grandmothers and grandfathers of the Catholic Volga Germans in north eastern Colorado and their folklore. He is not as much concerned about the where and when as about the why and how. His *enthusiasm* was soon evident in his prodigious writings. His masters thesis, to which AHSGR was given publication rights, won recognition and acclaim in international competition and professional publications. The accolades reflect favorably on all of us who are Germans from Russia.

Was Timothy *Kloberdanz* content to rest upon his laurels? Not at all! Spurred on by the public acceptance of his endeavors, his concerns have extended far beyond the Catholic Volga German in *one corner* of one state emphasis, to encompass *all* the Germans from Russia, of *all* faiths in two countries.

A \$3,000.00 grant insures that Tim will collect existent folklore in hitherto unstudied Russian German communities in northern Iowa, south-central North Dakota and western Canada. He will revise the manuscript we will publish to reflect his newest findings. His popular articles in *our Journal* will be enriched by his expanded expertise.

As Tim's upward mobility toward that coveted doctorate is accelerated by this project, we are *all* elevated -Catholic or Protestant; Volga German or Black Sea German; *all* the Germans from Russia.

What is smaller than a group of Catholics in a corner of Colorado and larger than a maternal grandmother in Oklahoma? It happens to be the community of *Endicott*, Washington.

Unlike our previous two projects which had their genesis in the fertile minds of two enthusiastic men, in Endicott an enthusiastic booster club initiated the project and picked the men. This Washington community has a Russian German majority and a *Scandinavian* minority. Civic leaders recognized the true worth of their heritage. As a testament of their esteem for their immigrant forefathers they have launched an ambitious program of preservation and presentation.

AHSGR's \$400.00 grant is just seed money that will be used with other monies to match funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. \$15,432.00 will be used to collect and preserve.

Acquired artifacts too large to be moved easily, will be preserved in a museum. Others will be put in a portable exhibit. This will give the Germans from Russia sympathetic and scholarly exposure all over the

state of Washington - at fairs and historical meetings. At the [Smithsonian](#) Folk Life Festival here in Seattle on Memorial Day weekend it served notice to that august body that we have and continue to contribute to the growth and prosperity of the two largest countries on this continent. We hope they got the message and will use their good office to spread the word. Those of us not from Washington, now have our opportunity to examine this exhibit here at our convention.

Dr. Donald A [Messerschmidt](#), the project [co-ordinator](#), envisions a total community commitment to the project as all the citizens of [Endicott](#), from students to Senior Citizens, Service Clubs and Scandinavians strive mightily to preserve and promote the saga of two distinguished minorities. We will all bask in the limelight.

In 1975 there came forth from the hallowed halls of higher education in Fort [Collins](#), Colorado, a plan. It was an idea designed to be more encompassing than a community project, more inclusive than a folklore study, and more intricate than a genealogical search. Colorado State University launched the Colorado Study Project on the Germans from Russia. Many of the goals and methods are similar to those of [AHSGR](#).

Like Endicott, Washington, they are recording, collecting and preserving oral history, artifacts, manuscripts and anything else pertaining to the Germans from Russia. But they are doing it on a state wide scale. Like Timothy [Kloberdanz](#), they are preserving the folklore of the Germans from Russia, but on a state wide scale. Like John Butler, they are searching for those obscure instruments that will help genealogists trace their roots, but on a state wide scale. In addition, through the generosity of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, it's International Foundation, and it's Colorado and Wyoming chapters, the Project has been administering a scholarship program for two years now to encourage the study by undergraduate students of the history and culture of Russian Germans in Colorado and the United States. This year, through private contributions, the Project will also grant a Graduate Research [Assistantship](#) for work toward the [M.A.](#) at [CSU](#) in German studies.

Area citizens of Russian German descent bring the students into their homes so they may absorb the atmosphere and food of our culture. In spite of the fact that the Project has lost it's University funding it continues to expand, and has gone far beyond state boundaries. Dr. Sidney [Heitman](#), the project director, will be on sabbatical leave during 1979-80 to go to West Germany for a study of the Russian Germans in the USSR under Soviet rule. Much of this is a long term investment which we expect to bring handsome returns in eager and able young people, dedicated to the proposition that "[Unsere Leute](#)" have a special story worthy of continuous study.

May all these projects funded by our foundation, give validity to Goethe's observation. "[Was Glanz ist fuer den Augenblick geboren: das Echte bleibt den Nachwelt unverloren!](#)" What dazzles for the moment spends its spirit; what's genuine, posterity shall inherit.

During the year 1978-1979 memorial gifts to the Foundation honored these individuals.

Mr. and Mrs. Alexander [Albrecht](#)
David and Christine [Andreas](#)
Herman A. [Arnst](#)
Lawrence [Bauer, Jr.](#)
Katie Bertram
Mr. and Mrs. Jake [Bolger](#)
John [Deines](#)
Mrs. Ella [Ellestad](#)
Maria [Fischer](#)
Mr. and Mrs. Henry [Flack](#)
Peter and Elisabeth [Geier](#)
Peter [Goertz](#)
[Leroy](#) Koch
Pauline Koch
Chester [G. Krieger](#)

[Jerry](#) Miller
Alexander [Oblander](#)
Elizabeth [Repp](#)
Mrs. Conrad [Sauer](#)
George [Sauer](#)
Mr. and Mrs. Louis [Sauer](#)
Peter [Sauer](#)
Conrad [Schaneman, Sr.](#)
Harry [Schultz](#)
Fred [Schwabauer](#)
G. Ray [Schwabland](#)
Joseph Anthony [Schwan](#)
[Magdalen Richter](#) Schwan
Alexander [Stenzel](#)
Mrs. Harold [Wiederspahn](#)

PRESERVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

Ruth M. Amen

The AHSGR International Foundation-what it is, what it does, what you can do-is the theme of a new brochure prepared for presentation at this convention. It introduces an ambitious building program. This brochure was designed by Walt and Karen Jensen of Omaha, Nebraska, members of AHSGR.

Preserving the past for the future. .

The AHSGR International Foundation



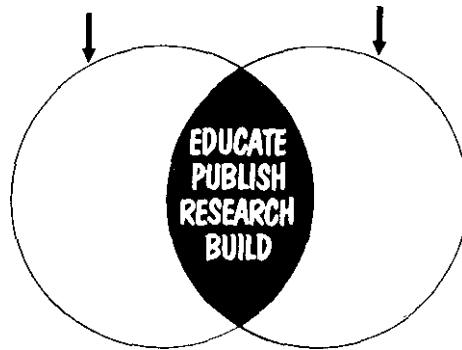
The Foundation—What it is

The brochure shows how our dues to AHSGR and donations to the Foundation work together to achieve the goals of our society,

DONATIONS DUES

Ike International Foundation

was created to raise money for the special historical, literary, and educational projects of its parent organization, the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.



AHSGR,

founded in 1968, has grown into an international organization with many thousands of dues-paying members who share a unique ethnic bond. The Society helps its members better understand and enjoy this ethnic heritage.

FOUNDATION AHSGR

SPECIAL PROJECTS NEED SPECIAL FUNDING!

Dues to AHSGR pay only for the routine business of the Society. There is a continuing need for funds to sponsor the special projects of AHSGR. The International Foundation exists to meet this need.

The Foundation began with a single gift of just \$2.00; in less than four years, there were over 300 donors.

Every dollar donated goes either to grants or to savings toward future projects. The Foundation is committed to keeping expenditures to a minimum. The Board of Trustees, which serves without remuneration, is committed to making every dollar a tangible force in preserving an accurate, complete history of the Germans from Russia.

The Foundation was officially incorporated in March of 1974 as a non-profit organization registered in the State of Colorado. Operations are closely scrutinized by the Trustees to be sure that rules governing charitable funds are adhered to.

In its five years of existence, the Foundation has not only made possible several valuable research projects but has also made a good start towards raising funds for a permanent headquarters building.

The Foundation-What it does

Grants already awarded by the Foundation are described in the brochure. As important as the research already funded is the hopes for the years ahead.

THE OFFICIAL PURPOSE OF THE FOUNDATION IS TO RAISE MONEY...

- * **TO RESEARCH** and preserve the art, folklore, heritage, and artifacts of the Germans from Russia,
- * **TO PUBLISH** works related to the history of these people,
- * **TO ASSIST** members with genealogical research,
- * **TO BUILD** and establish an international repository for the permanent collection of AHSGR material.

THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.
THERE ARE EXCITING HOPES
AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

Residents of Endicott, Washington, a predominantly Russian German community are working to preserve their heritage. A Foundation grant is helping restore the plowing bae, a turn-of-the-century activity.



At CSU in Fort Collins, Colorado, interest continues to be high in the history department's study project of Germans from Russia in Colorado. The Foundation has given valuable financial support to the project.



John Butler of Stillwater, Oklahoma, is in the process of compiling genealogical information from all the obituaries that have appeared in der Sendbote. His work is possible because of a Foundation grant.

The colorful history of these early RussianGerman settlers in the Dakotas is being told to Tim Klobardanz, professor of history at the University of North Dakota. A recent grant from the Foundation enables Mr. Klobardanz to compile the folklore into a fascinating and authoritative publication for the society.



THROUGH THE FOUNDATION, AHSGR Will BE ABLE TO

- **BUILD** a headquarters office and library,
- **ADD** to the historical archives and library,
- **CONTINUE** a dynamic program of publishing both fiction and non-fiction accounts of its people's history,
- **SPONSOR** research among students and historians in colleges and universities.

The Foundation-What you can do

Finally, the new brochure presents a challenge to its members to "remember the Foundation with their contribution."

CAN THE FOUNDATION DO ALL THIS?

YES~ IF you care!

YES- IF you help!

YES~IF you remember the Foundation with your contribution.

Voluntarily and involuntarily we show our attitudes toward giving. AHSGR and the Foundation exist only because many people were willing to give both time and funds to help explain their heritage.

Won't you show your attitude of grateful appreciation for this heritage by giving to the AHSGR International Foundation?



Countless families such as the one pictured above came to America to find and preserve freedom in a new land. At the left, a mother shows her young son through the AHSGR museum where he can begin to learn about and enjoy the history of his grandparents and great-grandparents.

SPECIAL DONOR CATEGORIES:

Diamond Heritage Donor	\$5000 or more
Golden Heritage Donor	Friendship
Donor Sustaining	Donor Supporting
	\$1000 or more \$
Donor Lamplighter	Helpful Donor
	500 or more \$
Please send your contributions to;	100 or more \$ 50
	or more \$ 25 or
AHSGR international	
Foundation 631 D Street	more Up to \$25
Lincoln, Nebraska	

Gifts of any amount are appreciated. Various kinds of donations are possible:

- CASH GIFTS
- PLEDGES
- GRANTS
- INVESTMENTS AND SECURITIES
- BEQUESTS IN WILLS
- CONTRIBUTIONS HONORING A BIRTHDAY, ANNIVERSARY, GRADUATION, ETC.
- MEMORIALS IN HONOR OF LOVED ONES

Funds may be designated for a special purpose or they may be given to the general fund to be distributed at the direction of the Board of Trustees.

Note: All contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.

Society of Germans from Russia. I would like to think that a century from now our building will be replaced if necessary. I trust that what AHSGR stands for will be I want to see a headquarters building that belongs to us, the American Historical alive and endure for countless generations to come. I hope, too, that some of our family members like young Stuard Jensen will be a part of a diamond celebration seventy-five years from now. That is why we have a "diamond heritage donor" designation.

Now that all of you have seen the new brochure, you also understand the "IF" buttons some of us have been wearing this week. You all have one of these at your place. We invite you to wear it proudly to show that you care, that you will help, and that you will remember the Foundation with your contribution.



Editor's Note: Following the presentation of the new brochure, copies of which were at each place of the 550 attending the Foundation luncheon on June 30, 1979, Ruth Amen introduced the "young man" pictured on the front of the brochure-Michael Josiah Kloberdanz in the arms of his "Vess" Lena, who is related to both his parents. He made a contribution from his piggy bank to the building fund in memory of his great, great, great grandmother Doetzel.



Michael Josiah Kloberdanz with his parents, Timothy and Rosalinda Appelhanz.

PROJECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Gordon L. Schmidt, President

To have spent the last five days working with all the people involved with making the 10th annual convention in Seattle a success has been another great experience. The expectations of the participants, the energies of all the people attending and, most important, the work of the convention planners clearly makes the point that AHSGR is strong and healthy. I cannot really put my finger on any one thing that makes this organization so successful. What makes it continue to grow in numbers every year? Why is volunteer help from professional and non-professional sources increasing?

Our research is scattered over many states. Our developing files and records are being maintained in homes here, there and everywhere. Archives and research materials are located in Colorado and in Nebraska with further materials waiting for some safe and permanent repository to be established. Our grants will again produce more and more information which needs to be preserved for further use by our members and for publication by the organization. Our people want to understand who we are. Our emerging pride in our heritage makes us strong, the knowledge of our success in contributing to the development and wealth of our country brings out the best in us. The organization probably provides the best method of having our children understand and maintain our moral values and our social ties. Realizing this, many ethnic groups are hurriedly developing historical societies to assist them in researching and promulgating their past. AHSGR is among the successful and growing survivors. However, it has grown to such proportions that future long term success appears to depend on a central system of collecting and a central place for housing its material,

In 1976 every membership was mailed a ballot for an opportunity to vote on the location of headquarters. There was an excellent response to this mailing with more than 90% voting to place headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska. The importance of building proper facilities has been discussed for almost three years. Some donations have been designated for this. Finally the big step has to be taken. Plans have to be made.

At the February 1979 meeting of the Board of Directors a motion was made and seconded and carried for President Adam Giesinger to establish a committee to do the preliminary work necessary in establishing a site for the building of adequate headquarters facilities. Dr. Giesinger then sent out a letter organizing a committee which would in effect:

- project our housing needs
- search for a site
- present a progressive developmental plan—that is, to proceed in stages as needed
- estimate the costs
- present their findings to the board at the April 1979 meeting.

This work was accomplished and the findings presented to the Board last April. The minutes show that several old public school buildings were examined. Other available sites were examined. The final recommendation covered an area where the current rented headquarters are located. The board physically walked through and examined the entire area. All of this time, all of this discussion, all of this examination finally resulted in a motion: "That the Building Committee take the necessary steps to acquire land in the area bounded by C and D Streets and 6th and 7th Streets in Lincoln, Nebraska, for the future site of AHSGR headquarters building." The motion carried. The Board then agreed to present this entire concept to the convention body in June.

No definite material action has been taken. No money has been spent or committed to the concept. We do not feel anything can happen until we can prudently justify financial expenditures.

The AHSGR Board of Directors and the Foundation Board of Trustees have met jointly in two sessions while here in Seattle to review the concept. Many questions were asked even to the point of going into some specific details which will need to be finalized in the normal course of moving forward with the project. Since the entire constituency is involved in the permanency and the growth of the organization and in its value to their posterity, the two boards voted to present the findings to the entire body at this time.

In the course of the next year, beginning today, we will need to contact each one of you by a letter and many of you personally for your financial commitment to this important phase of our growth. We are not asking you to vote on any exact design or any exact size but we are interested in your reaction to the total concept so that the development of this project will meet the needs of the organization and have your financial support.

The chairman of this committee will make this presentation. He has been a member of the board almost since its inception. He lives in Lincoln and is constantly reminded by visual observation of the needs of the Society. Ed is an educator. He is a member of our University Board of Regents and has served the state well for many years. Ed Schwartzkopf, it is my pleasure to turn the meeting over to you.

OUR AHSGR HEADQUARTERS-A CHALLENGE

Edward Schwartzkopf

We are here today because we were born into this heritage; we are extremely proud and we want to preserve it. Of course, this is like history. It is a record of human progress and we ought to be spending more time in preserving it. That is what we are trying to do at this time.

We have gathered at this luncheon to present to you all the facts that we have developed to this point regarding our AHSGR headquarters. The board feels that if you have all the facts, and the facts are correct, we can move ahead with decisive deliberation. I would like to introduce to you at this time the other members of the Building Committee-Jake Sinner, Gordon Schmidt and Ralph Giebelhaus.

[There followed a slide presentation showing the present headquarters and the adjacent lots, the site that has been selected for a future headquarters building. The slides pictured the surrounding area which includes several of the German churches, a park, a residence that has already been placed on the national register for historic preservation and a former German parochial school, now the headquarters for the American Forward Association where we are renting space to get out our mailings. The final slide pictured an architect's concept of what AHSGR's headquarters might be.]

One of the questions our parents always asked—and their parents asked—was, "Can we do this? How do we pay for this?" I say, when you ask if we can do this, "You darn right we can do this!" This organization is just like that big, mean gorilla at the zoo. When they are moving him around and someone asks where the gorilla is going to sleep tonight, the zoo keeper says, "Wherever he *wants* to sleep." I say this organization can do *anything we make up our minds to have it do*. It is within our reach and we have the potential within this organization. I never cease to be fascinated by the things that happen in this society and how we keep moving ahead.

We must have some idea of the standard of giving—what we need to have happen to get the job done. The gifts needed don't necessarily have to be given by one person but two or three could get together. This is a commitment to our heritage—its past, present, future. I notice this is the theme of our program today. We have set this commitment at \$100,000 for the next three years. The gift range as indicated here shows we will need:

- 1 gift of \$40,000
- 2 gifts of \$20,000
- 3 gifts of \$15,000
- 4 gifts of \$10,000
- 5 gifts of \$ 7,000
- 6 gifts of \$ 5,000
- 10 gifts of \$ 2,000
- 15 gifts of \$ 1,000
- 20 gifts of \$ 500
- 40 gifts of \$ 250
- 50 gifts of \$ 100
- 100 gifts of \$ 50
- Numerous gifts below \$50.00

I am *convinced* that we can do this. Your gift is tax deductible and we want you to get the maximum benefit from your contribution so far as tax deductions are concerned.

How are we going to do this? Can we do this? The challenge is for the entire organization. It is not just for the board members. It is not just for chapter presidents. It takes all of us, all of us contributing to make this a successful campaign. If it is something we believe in, if it is something we are dedicated to, if it is something we are committed to, we can reach the goal. We can exceed the goal. I challenge us at this time to meet that goal-to exceed that goal!

CHAPTER NIGHT

All chapters have an opportunity to show off their activities and special projects-some for fund raising. on their special night. It's a fun time to "visit" the 36 local organizations, to exchange program ideas, and t view the specially designed banners.



Central Washington Chapter



Greater Seattle Chapter



Olympia Chapter



Saginaw Valley Chapter



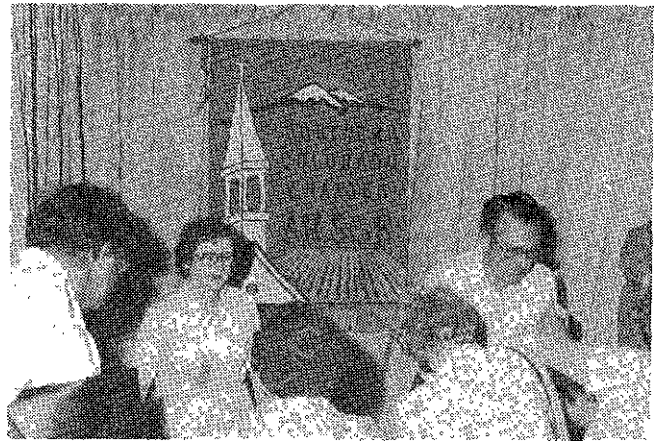
Sacramento Valley Chapter



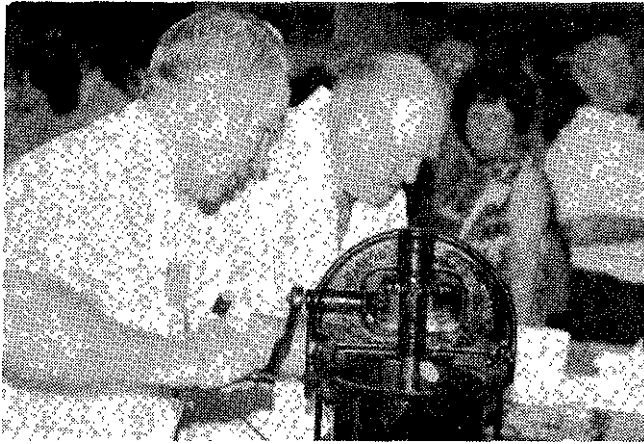
Golden Gate Chapter



Denver Metro Chapter



Northern Colorado Chapter



Greater Seattle Chapter served ethnic foods during chapter visitation and had crowds looking on and tasting — Henry Fritzler, left, and Albert Hill cranked out the sausage which was cooked and eaten as quickly as they could produce it.



Flint Chapter



Lincoln, Nebraska Chapter

TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION BANQUET: RUSSIA OVER THREE GENERATIONS

RUSSIA AS MY GRANDPARENTS REMEMBERED IT

Nancy Bernhardt Holland

Anyone who has heard the story of the Germans from Russia knows how our history began with that handful of ill-prepared peasants, perfumers, courtiers, soldiers, and wig-makers, their ranks decimated by distance and disease, who faced the barren immensity of the wind-blown Russian steppe. Our history begins with accounts of almost unimaginable difficulties; A lack of housing, short supplies of food, seeds, and farming equipment, ignorance of suitable agricultural techniques, adverse weather, unscrupulous Russian administrators, restrictive regulations, the scourge of robber bands and wolf packs, the vandalism of the Pugachev rebellion, and raids by Nomadic tribes of Kirghiz and Kalmucks who pillaged, murdered, and often carried colonists off into slavery.

And anyone with the courage to continue reading our history knows how the chapters in Russia end: with abrogation of promised privilege, forced russification, the persecutions of two world wars, the atrocities of revolution and civil strife, forced collectivization, repeated famine, the deportations and slave labor camps of the Stalinist regime, the liquidation of the German colonies, and the final expurgation of the Germans—even from the recorded history of the Soviet Union.

These terrible events fit like a great set of parentheses on the footnote to human experience that is the history of the Germans in Russia. And yet between these tragic frames there is another story, a chapter in the life of the Germans from Russia that was a Golden Age, and idyllic and tranquil period, a paradise on the steppe.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the German colonies were relatively untroubled times. The almost unimaginable difficulties of the settlement period had been survived and served as pride-evoking memories of trials overcome, hardships endured that enhanced the ethnic solidarity of the Germans who were finally at home on the steppe—no longer strangers in a strange land. The 104 mother colonies had survived, grown, and prospered and flung out scores of daughter settlements that stretched like a twisted strand of bright pearls along both sides of the Volga and its tributaries. Great tracts of new lands had brought economic security. And after having made a few concessions to the governments Russification policies—Russian was now a required language in the colony schools and young Germans were subject to the draft—the colonies were left relatively free from Russian intervention. The fierce tribes of nomads had retreated eastward and even the shaggy steppe wolves had been annihilated or had slunk back into the deep forests of the Volga *Bergseite*.

Small outposts of progress had blossomed into charming villages with symmetrical tree-lined streets, usually forming a grid around a Kontor-style church—center of the village's life. Substantial homes, each with a neat courtyard, faced the scrupulously swept streets.

This is the untroubled pre-revolutionary Russia in which my grandparents lived and to which, after a short sojourn in the United States, they had hoped to return. I've heard so many appealing things about life in pre-revolutionary Russia that I often find myself feeling a bit homesick for the Old Country—nostalgic for a time and place that exists nowhere but in my Grandmother's memory and my own imagination. For as Grandmother puts it, *"Die goldene Zeit ist vefschwunna"* ("That golden time is gone forever").

What I miss most is the sense of community that characterized villages like the lovely little spot on a tributary of the Jeruslan known as Morning Dew (*"Morgentau"*). In this little *Dorf* on the *Wiesenseite*, my maternal grandmother, Amalia Zwetzig (Mrs. Henry) Kniss spent the happy years of her girlhood, 1908-1912. In *Morgentau* 1200 people lived in close caring community like one extended family. Kinship ties were extremely important in the remote and rather inbred German colonies. One of the things wrong with life in the United States, I've learned from my grandmother, is that people here don't keep their relatives long enough. Here where people move carelessly from place to place and as Grandmother puts it, *"Jeder Rotznass hat sein eingene Platz"* ("Every green kid has his own place"), people are cousins, then there are second cousins, and then they're not even relatives anymore. In the Old Country everyone kept his relatives *"zum Zehnte Lapja vom Elefte Gebak"* ("to the tenth loaf of the eleventh baking") as Grandmother puts it. Of course families had more of an opportunity to keep track of their relatives since they usually lived with them. As many as forty persons occupied one household as married sons brought their brides under their father's roof and cousins were raised together like siblings. In fact, in several of our

dialects cousins are known as *Halbbrueder und Halbschwestern* ("half-brothers and half-sisters"). Of course this also made anyone's problems a family concern and the business of the whole village. This situation proved the source for legends and nicknames. Every village had its *Shebbe Han-Peter* ("crooked John-Peter."). Every village had its variation on the story of the woman caught stealing something, a pound of lard or a ring of sausage. For her punishment she might be shamed before the whole community, perhaps wearing the stolen sausage ringed around her neck for a day. She would ever after be known throughout the village as *Die Wurst Mane* ("sausage Mary"). Or maybe there was a unique character like *Der Pfeifer's Halbe*. Professor Kloberdanz tells the story of the lazy youth from the village of *Herzog* who protested against doing a man's work because he was not yet mature, "*ich bin bloss e' halber Mann*" he protested. ("I am only half a man.") He was called *Der Halber* ("The Half") the rest of his life-and his son also carried the stigma of his father and was known in the village as *Der Fertel* ("The Quarter").

The Volga villagers had long memories and a penchant for making fun of one another. As Grandmother puts it, in *Morgentau*, as in other villages, "*Wer Schade hat braucht nicht fuer Spott sorgen*." ("Whoever has suffered some indignity need not look far for ridicule.")

While the lack of privacy meant that everyone in the village knew and remembered everyone else's faults and failings, it also meant that the sins and sorrows were shared by the whole community. As Grandmother has observed,

*"Vor jeder Tuer da Uegt e' Stah' "At every door there lies a weight
Wanns net grosse isf, da ist es klaa. " It is either small or great."*

A Volga villager could be content that the entire community would help in shouldering and carrying that burden.

Another attractive thing about life on the Volga during the *pre-revolutionary* period was the sense of security. In *Morgentau* there was very little to fear. And there was no prejudice, no privilege, no poverty. There could be no ethnic or religious prejudice since everyone in the village was a good God-fearing German Lutheran. There could be no political privilege since every family had a voice in community affairs. There was no economic privilege since lands were communally held and were periodically *reapportioned* according to the number of male souls in a family, so no one could amass more wealth than he needed, nor would anyone suffer inordinate poverty. Even garden plots at the edge of the village were reassigned every year to ensure equality. And there was no pressure to keep up with the Joneses. Of course, in our villages there were no Joneses!

And there were no germs in the Old Country. Grandmother has told me she never heard of germs until she came to the United States. In *Morgentau* one could rather unconcernedly share a dipper of cold water with a friend, dip wooden spoons into the same bowl of *Gloess*, or even pass a bottle around with the fear of contagion.

Of course people did fall ill, but remedies were always close at hand: a few leaves plucked from the *Hell-Stock* on the window sill, a cup of *Susshohtea*, or perhaps a bit of *Voegel Dreck* (the ever efficacious bird droppings). In the case of stomach ache *Mann konnts Glass ufsetza*. One could use the curative glass and candle. For serious ailments there was the salutary laying on of hands of a dead *Hausvater*. And there was always the comforting Volga prognosis for any illness, *Des vergeht auch widder* ("That'll go away by itself").

Occasionally when the ailments did not go away, the villager simply "caught his death." As they put it in *Morgentau*, "*Der hat's so im Leib gehat das er sterva musst*" ("He had it in his stomach so bad that he had to die"). Even then, or perhaps especially then, villagers could take comfort in their community. People in the village took turns sitting up with the body of a deceased person between the time of death and interment, and everyone in the village attended the funeral, packing the small house, or joining in hymns from outside *im Hof*. And all the villagers would make the sad Journey from the *Trauerhaus*, following the casket to the small cluster of crosses at the edge of the *steppe*. No one in *Morgentau* was an island. From birth to burial, no one was alone.

An equal share of land for each male soul provided a kind of economic security; an equal identity in the community provided psychological security, and a shared philosophical assurance that God was at the center of things (as the church was the physical center of the village) scripting events to suite His purposes, provided a spiritual security. The Volga villagers were, I think, predominantly unquestioning and unassuming and ascribed to the credo, *Wie's geht, geht's recht* ("Whatever is, is right"). Life in *Morgentau* conformed to my Grandmother's description:

Wir leben gut	It's going well
Wir leben suss	It's going great
Wir leben ohne Sorge'	And we don't worry much.
Als andere Leit zu Mittag essen	We sit down to breakfast
Da essen wir zu Morge'.	When other folks eat lunch.

And life in our *Wiesenseite Dorf* was uncomplicated by concern with world events. Existence was tied to the more enduring events of nature, the church calendar, and the rounds of the seasons.

As the spring-melted snow waters receded from the greening meadows surrounding the village, spots of brilliant color would appear: wild crocus, tulips, cornflowers, wide bands of sunflowers. The spring air was sweet with the scent of the snowy blooms that swathed the *Schlehe* plum bushes tangled along the banks of the quiet *Kuba*, the little river that bisected the village. Glassy green leaves shimmered newly on the tender branches of the poplars and *cottonwood* trees that bordered the little lake at the edge of the village near the brickyard that we called the *Grosse See*, the great lake. And in preparation for Pentecost, that lovely church festival of spring, every house in the village had received a fresh coat of whitewash.

Von Ostern bis zu Pfingsten,	The most beautiful time of the
Dass 1st die schoenste Zeit.	year is the period between Easter
Da paaren sich alle Voegelein	and Pentecost. At that time all the
Und alle junge Leut,	little birds form <i>pairs-and</i> so do all
	the young people.

On Pentecost Eve, courtyards suddenly blossomed as young men planted *Pfingstbaume*, little flowering shrubs or decorated branches in the yards of their favorite girls. The little children played at mock marriage ceremonies with the child taking the part of the minister pronouncing a benediction over the "married couple" that went like this:

Ihr seit verlobt	You are betrothed	Und bleibt verlobt.
You'll stay betrothed.	Sein Hundja beisst	His little dog will bite Dein
Katzja tod.	Your kitten to death.	

Perhaps one of our researchers could work on the significance of that one!

In the still crisp evenings older children gathered to play *Gringteball* and *Erdloch* in the wide fields at the edge of the village while the small ones hopped up and down on the hard packed and neatly swept dirt of the village streets chirping rimes and verses:

Drei ritza rote Aepfelyen
 Drei ritza rote Pflanza.
 Wann mein Baba ein Spielmann war
 Da koennt ich besser tanze.

In a different language and a different meter that might be rendered,

Three ruby red apples
 Three ruby red plants.
 If Dad was a musician
 Then I'd know how to dance.

I like to think it was only the boys in the village who chanted the less decorous rimes:

Hier liegt die alte Mutter	Here lies the old Mother
Die war vom Spatza Kutter	She came from Spatza Kutter
Die istjetzt nights mehr wert	It's not much that she's worth
Komm, schert sie in die Ert.	Come, plant her in the earth.
Die Lot' ist krank	Charlotte is sick
Die Lot' ist krank	Charlotte is sick
Die hat ein schebe Zehe	Her toe is feeling numb,
Die hiegelt in die Kueche rum	She limps around the kitchen
Fresst mir all mei Schlehe.	And eats up every plum.

Hopse Wees Katdnlisbet
 Die Lisbet leit am sterva
 Mach a Pan voll
 Oele hass
 Und schuet es in die Kerve.

Oh Auntie Elizabeth
 Our Lizzie's about to die.
 Heat up a pan of healing oil
 And pour it in her eye.

(I've translated this poem the way I have for the sake of the rime, but I admit that the original German suggests that the oil be poured somewhere else.)

In every village household the spring's new baby could be heard cooing contentedly in a warm corner behind the *bakova*—*or* being bounced boisterously on a knee to the chant of

Tross Tross Trillja
 Der Bauer hat a Fillja
 Fillja kann net laufa
 Bauer musst verkava
 lauft Pillja weg
 Hat der Bauer Dreck.

This rime I'm
 sure needs no translation.

For the adults in the village spring meant plowing and planting and the satisfying odor of newly-turned land. As the days grew warmer and crops began to grow there were excursions to the fields and garden patches for hoeing, everyone in the village working together until everyone's plot was completed. In the late spring a narrow-eyed Tartar named Ishmael would arrive at the village looking for field workers to hoe the acres of vegetables he raised on his estate several miles from Morgentau. Young couples looking for a little extra cash volunteered to go. A few young girls hoping to earn money to invest in the day's fashion fad, *Lange Schertzer*, long white pinafores with shoulder ruffles which were worn over dresses, begged their parents to let them go along. I get the impression that this experience was the Russian equivalent of summer camp. The girls worked from sunup to sundown hoeing vegetables under the watchful eye of the Tartar's father-in-law, cooked their own meals in a pot suspended from a *Drei-fuss* over an open fire, and slept on the straw pallets they had brought with them.

Soon the days lengthened and the season changed to the sweltering summer. Now it was time for segregated swimming parties. Boys splashed, dived, and lathered their horses in the cool waters of the *Grosse See* while the girls modestly outfitted in long white shifts cavorted in the quiet waters of the *Kuba*.

The steppe was swathed in summer gold as fields of wheat shimmered in an unbroken circle from horizon to horizon, like the sea. Families packed provisions in their wagons, tethered oxen and camels and abandoned their village to camp out in the fields. The long summer days were spent cutting and threshing grain; the short summer nights were spent sleeping in the wagons under the jeweled sky—another unbroken circle of darkness and light.

In late summer the sweet watermelons were gathered—their juicy hearts scooped out, sieved, and boiled for hours into the winter's supply of *Arbuse Honig*. While the mothers and older daughters stirred the pink liquid into a syrupy sweetness, the youngsters ran about in hats and helmets made of watermelon *Schale*—matting their hair with the sticky sweet juice. Meanwhile the family cellar was prepared to receive the fruits of the harvests—the *Lahmestahn* walls and steps were painted with a fresh coat of mud and the cellar alcoves were supplied with *Stenner* filled with *Kraut*, *Apfel*, *Arbuse*, *Rot Riva*, and grapes preserved in anise water.

When the harvest was complete villagers drove far out into the steppe and plowed up the prairie sod to get at the sweet anise roots beneath the soil. These were dried during the autumn months on the wagon beds and later used to make steppe-tea., the everyday drink of our people.

Late summer also brought strangers to the village: *Die Zigeuner* (Gypsies) and *Der Ringelmann*, an itinerant Russian peddler who collected rags and bones and paid for them with treasures like glass jewelry and shepherd's pipes. If the bones and rags Grandmother and her sisters had gathered weren't enough to trade for some particular treasure that had bewitched them, they would dash about looking for more before *Der Ringelmann* left the village. My Grandmother's mother could usually tell when *Der Ringelmann* had been to the village because her *Spielumpa* ("dishcloth") would invariably be missing.

The ragged and motley Gypsies too descended on the village exchanging fortunes, songs, and stories, for edibles—often carrying with them a bit more than the German family had offered in the bargain. While one of the dark-skinned and light-fingered Gypsy women beguiled the German housewife with a song and a look into the *ungewissene Zukunft*, another Gypsy made a survey of the chicken yard. Grandmother

describes how one clever Gypsy entertainer adapted her song to fit changing circumstances as the German daughter-in-law headed out to see what was happening in her hen house. The *Gypsay* sang an impromptu chorus that went like this:

Eil dich draus	Hurry out
Eil dich draus	Hurry out
Da ist noch a Frau im Haus	There's another wife about
Die kommt raus	She's coming out
Die kommt raus	She's coming out
Und doppt dich.	To grab you.

Perhaps the major event of the late autumn was the annual trip to the bazaar at *Seelmann*. Here the *Hausvater* and a favored member of the family (it was always my grandmother) made the day-long trip by wagon to the larger village to buy the winter supplies of staples; flour, salt, coffee, cones of sugar, and tin chests of Chinese tea that was drunk only on Sundays. There were special treats carried back to brothers and sisters in *Morgentau*; linen bags filled with pretzels and sweets: *Brenik*, *Gallarega*, and *Confec*. And there was the excitement of staying overnight in a *Bustayal*—(The *Seelmann* equivalent of Howard Johnson's) and the biggest treasure; of all-a ride on the *Gatschella-Seeimann's* celebrated merry-go-round.

It was the last burst of uninhibited pleasure before the villagers snuggled down into another Russian winter. And this was the season for school.

0 wie frolich	0 how super
0 wie schon	0 how cool
ist es in die Schul zu gehn.	We think it's great to go to school.

Felz-stivvel crunching over the frozen snow, the students walked to the *Schulhaus* in the middle of the village (which also served as the village church in *Morgentau*). Bundled to the eyes in immense woolen shawls, they still arrived at the school house with chilled cheeks and wind-cherried noses,

The long winter nights were spent going *spehle*. Here the men gathered to smoke *Baberruska ovDuvak* from long clay pipes—to plan the reminisce and tell wolf stories. The women listened and worked at the *Spinrad* or *Websthul* while the youngsters amused themselves with songs, stories, riddles and making figures out of bits of cloth. Everyone joined in the *Gnubbera*, littering the floor of the *Gute Stube* with sunflower-seed shells.

The tedium of the time of indoor confinement while the steppe blizzards raged was broken by Christmas. Like Germans everywhere, the Germans in Russia did not fail to keep these high holy days in the grandest possible style. As one of the last acts of autumn a large cherry branch was always cut and stored in the cellar. As Christmas approached, the branch was put in a container of cold water—then planted in a pot of earth to which oat and rye seeds were added. By Christmas eve, the branch *war aus geschlaga* with delicate blossoms and the grain had sprouted, creating the effect of a blooming tree in a green meadow—a momentary intrusion of spring into the tedious steppe winter.

Since there were no pine trees on the *Wiesenseite*, the cherry branch served as the Christmas tree, decorated with walnuts, gourds, and apples wrapped in gold and silver foil or with paper chains and candles.

And the blizzards raged on. During particularly bad nights, the villagers took turns in the towered belfry near the school ringing the bell all night long so any travelers on the Steppe could find their way to the safety of the village.

And then, suddenly, the great snows that had blanketed the meadows began to melt-and it was really soggy spring again. Roads became impassable and treacherous quagmires into which it was rumored wagons, harnesses and horses had disappeared. So no one ventured out of the village until the late spring winds began to roll across the plains and bright bits of color began to appear again in the meadows. Where would one want to be rushing off to anyway? Wasn't all the world contained here in this drop of eternity on the brink of the *Kuba*?

Anyway, as Grandmother would say, "*So war's im unserum Dorf.*" That's the way it was in our village.

RUSSIA AS MY PARENTS VIEWED IT

Peter Pauls

Dear friends and cousins in the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, I would like to communicate to you in the language of our forefathers, but I will make an effort to speak in your language. But I hope that if you come to South America, you will make the same effort to express your feelings in Portuguese or in Spanish!

South America is far away, but we have many, many things in common. We are one in the same history; we are one in the same background. Our forefathers were one as pioneers in the waste steppes of Russia. We are one in the faith of our God. We are one in our heritage. We are scattered all over the world but we are one in our goal and obligation—the maintenance of the cultural values of our heritage. We are "pilgrims on the earth" and we have to do the work of our Father in heaven—This we have in common and many, many things.

Throughout the world they are scattered—the descendants of those immigrants and pioneers who more than two-hundred years ago on the invitation of Catherine the Great left Germany for Russia where they transformed the landscape of the Ukraine, and the Volga, and Siberia into prosperous villages and blooming gardens and turned the wide plains into the granaries of Russia.

Dear friends, I bring you warm greetings from South America. When I left my home country, Witmarsum, in the church service Mr. Jacob Isaac—the tour leaders know him, /a? He was your guide—he said, "Gruess mir all unsere Leute dort auf der Convention in Seattle." But I bring you greetings also from the July 25th Convention, an umbrella organization for those of German descent in Brazil. Theo Klein is the General Secretary. He wrote you this letter;

Dear Friends,

Through Mr. Peter Pauls of Witmarsum, Parana, I was apprised of your annual convention in Seattle, Washington. I send you warm greetings through him. The meeting of the cultural association, July 25th in Brazil has as its goal the maintaining and furthering of the traditional cultural values among the descendants of the German-speaking people who immigrated to Brazil more than 150 years ago. Among the immigrants are many former Russian Germans who have diligently upheld German cultural values. This is to the advantage of our homeland, Brazil, for those people, although true to their national origins, also consider themselves to be among the most loyal citizens of their new Fatherland. Out of the rich springs of cultural values of the past they find the perseverance and the resoluteness they need to face the battle of life.

With this we greet all interested friends,

Theo Klein General
Secretary

Two years ago we had the pleasure of meeting two groups from the American Historical Society in Brazil. That was a joyous occasion—the first contact for us of the South with you in the North. Now I have the pleasure and the privilege of being your guest. *Ich danke euch ganz herzlich fuer diese Gelegenheit hier dabei sein zu duerfen.* Many thanks for this invitation. I believe that this contact will serve to deepen and to strengthen our relationship—from the North to the South.

For my theme I want to say a few words about Russia in the view of my parents. For my parents, Russia was, above all else, home. It was the country in which their great-great grandparents, searching for land, had settled.

My parents grew up with the soil as a tree sinks its roots into the rich earth. With sweat, weariness, hard labor, and self-denial they built a new life near Orenburg close to the Ural mountains. A house, a village, a community, a place where they could say, "This is home. This is where I stay, where I belong. *Dies ist meine Heimat. Da bin ich zu Haus,*" in the words of a wonderful German song.

The families were joined together in a community association, the *Dorfgemeinschaft*. There was a village chairman who looked after the administration of village affairs. And there was also a village herdsman who watched over the herds of sheep and cattle. The schools served a very important function in the community. The steppes of Russia were not to be peopled by illiterates, but by educated men and women. They were intended to guarantee a sound and stable peasant class.

Not least were the churches or religious communities where one found stability, purpose, and meaning in life through faith in God. They had their special celebrations. I remember *die Familienfeste, Erntedank-*

feste, Singfeste. We need as community this communication. *Wir brauchen die Gemeinschaft, um bestehen zu koennen. Einer fuer alle und alle fuer einen.*

As for you, America, and for me, Brazil, is our home, so Russia was for my parents a land and a people that they loved. That was the land they served and in which they labored mightily to do their part in ensuring the development of Russia. The songs still sung in South America that call to remembrance days of long ago, bear witness to this.

In the silent dusk of evening	Homeless now I ever wander
When I think of by-gone days,	Through the whole of God's wide earth,
Then my thoughts are always turning	My true home I'll never find
To the home of former days.	Except in heaven—not on earth.
Where are all the by-gone years now?	In that beautiful land of Russia
Where all are the good old days?	On the lovely Dnieper banks
Now forever but a memory	Where I spent my youth and childhood
Of what lies so far away.	Lies my heart-my dear homeland.

I would like to share this song with you in the wonderful language of my childhood. Low German.*

Fifty years ago my parents came into the jungle of Brazil as refugees from Russia. Some of them fled over the Amur river through China and after three years they came to Brazil, And the others came through the western part through Germany into the jungle. The life was hard. They had to fight and to struggle in the dark jungle. Animals, snakes, thousands of birds were our neighbors. At harvest time we had to divide the crop with them. But God guided us to freedom. We shall praise Him.

Home. Home, It's a wonderful word. It means a house. It means a family. It means a place where you have to work, where you can stay, where you can live. This is home. The word "home" evokes feelings of joy, of security and acceptance but also brings the thought of sweat and tears. It was hard to get a new home in eastern Europe like my fathers did as pioneers near the Ural mountains. But when the Communist regime deprived them of freedom, took their preachers, and teachers, and leaders and sent men and women to Siberia where they died of cold and hunger ... My uncle ... he had studied at the University of Moscow and he was killed ... When their schools were closed and their churches locked, then Mother Russia drove out her most valuable sons and daughters. And they fled in darkness and in fog. No matter where to—but away from the land that our parents had made fertile, that they had cultivated, and that had been their homes for so many years,

On my trip to Germany in the last weeks I met many of our *Heimkehrer*, our people coming out of Russia. I was in eight different churches and how they joyed to be able to hear the Gospel! And they shared with me their experiences and their suffering and now they are praising God! Our Russian Germans were loathe to leave their homelands but their villages and communities were turned into vales of blood and tears, hunger and suffering, and they had to leave the land that their forefathers had settled more than 150 years earlier. There where nomads had wandered through centuries, there came the plow and grain and bread for millions. On those desolate steppes, trees were planted; houses, churches, schools were built. Culture was introduced. German people created a cultured farming class. Bitter was their reward. Their story is written in blood. Who could have foreseen it?

Our fathers left their sons and daughters a rich inheritance. The inheritance for you and for me we have to maintain. Therefore what you have inherited from your forefathers work to be worthy of. In the words of Goethe, *"Was du ererbt von deinen Vaetern, erwerb es umes zu besitzen."*

The beautiful villages, the well-tended gardens, the carefully painted houses are long since gone. And we can say with the poet Uhland, "Only one tall column stands, testimony of by-gone splendor, and even that is cracked now and may fall at any time."

As we consider our immediate past, we could become discouraged, but when we look to God our Lord who centuries ago led our forefathers from Germany to Russia and guided us and brought us to this place and this evening, we receive courage and we want to honor our heritage through faith.

In memory of the pioneers in Brazil we have a big memorial stone, ten to twelve meters high. And on this memorial stone you can find the words, *"•Unseren Vaetern zu Ehre, uns zur Lehre, unserem Vaterland zum Heil."* ("To honor our forefathers, for our learning, and for the well-being of our country.") May this be the goal also of this convention.

"Editor's Note: For Pastor Pauls' delightful Low German rendering of the song. *Journal* readers are referred to a tape transcription of the Tenth International Convention Banquet Program available for purchase at \$4.00 per cassette (plus \$ 1.00 for postage and handling) from *Marvl* Productions, P.O. Box 515, *Mukilteo*, Washington 98275.

RUSSIA AS I LIVED IT

Alexander Dupper

Life in Russia, since it has become the Soviet Union, is a life lived in fear.

My grandparents on both sides were landowners, and so were my parents. That made me a descendant of kulaks. To be descended from kulaks is a major political crime in the eyes of the Soviet dictators, and it hounded me as long as I lived under the Soviet regime.

After I graduated from the German School in Odessa I found that I was not allowed to enroll at the university, because of my social background. Only after I worked for three years in a factory and became a "proletarian" myself, was I permitted to enter.

In 1937 I was a third-year student at the University of Odessa. 1937 was the culmination of Stalin's terror before World War II. It was the year when dog ate dog. Half of the members of the almighty Polit-bureau in the Kremlin were destroyed. Almost the entire general staff of the Red Army was shot. Even the head of the secret police (NKVD, now KGB) did not survive the purge. This sent a wave of fear into all corners of the Soviet Union, and the students at the University of Odessa, like everyone else in the country, were scared to death. One could not trust even his best friend any more. Even relatives avoided visiting each other. It was the year of denunciations. There were many tragic instances of children reporting their own parents to the NKVD, and many marriages were dissolved when one partner found out that the other had some anti-soviet blood in his or her veins.

The churches were closed. Our Catholic and Orthodox friends removed their crucifixes and icons, replacing them with pictures of Lenin and Stalin, and my mother had to hide our family Bible under the mattress. Many people burned their documents from the past, being afraid that they might betray them in case of a search by the secret police (NKVD). And many a Bible and spiritual song book went into the fire as well. The smallest blemish in one's social past, such as landownership, private business, service in the Tsar's army, or church affiliation would mark one as a kulak, a capitalist, a counter-revolutionary, or a hated enemy of the people. Those are terms with which no one likes to be associated in the Soviet Union. For that, people were sent to Siberia by the trainload.

When one walked on the streets of the city in those days, one got into the habit of looking two blocks ahead in order to avoid in time any one who might possibly recognize you from the past. However, frequently one did run unexpectedly into a former acquaintance. For example, it could be an older lady, who had known you years ago. And you would exchange your "Hello" and "How are you?" But the situation could become disastrous, if she should ask politely, "Oh, are you not little Alex who attended St. Paul's Church and helped to ring the bells with the other boys?"

Since you could not afford to risk admitting that, you would say, "No, citizen, you are mistaken. I never rang the bells in the church. As a matter of fact, I never was in the church at all." (It was now forbidden to address people with "Mr." and "Mrs.," or "Sir" and "Madam.")

Then she would say with sorrow in her eyes, "I understand, I wish you well!" And ashamed, red in the face and ready to kick yourself for your cowardice you would run away. Denying everything about the incriminating past was sickening, but it was the only way to survive the terror of the dictatorship, and avoid the danger of being expelled from the University. To be expelled for politico-social reasons usually also meant a one-way ticket to Siberia. This diabolic fear is built into the Soviet system and is known, and felt by every citizen without exception. Members of the Communist Politbureau too are frequently sent to Siberia or shot. But, it is difficult to describe it, in its full depth, to people outside the Soviet Union.

Now for the epilogue. I did manage to graduate from the University of Odessa, survive the great fear and World War II, and come with my mother, sister, and nephew to the United States of America in January, 1952. I am now happily enjoying the human rights which were denied to us in the Soviet Union. I regret only that I could not have come to America some twenty years earlier.

Yes, I agree with Irving Berlin — "America! She is beautiful — from sea to shining sea!" Thank You!

THE CONVENTION BANQUET-AN EVENT TO BE REMEMBERED

For its beauty, its excellent speakers, and its fellowship with more than 700 in attendance, the banquet of this Tenth International Convention will always remain in the memory of everyone who was privileged to be there. From the moment one entered the room resplendent with its candlelight and scores of arrangements of flowers, it was an evening that said, "This evening alone makes an **AHSGR** convention an occasion I would never want to miss." So it is, year after year, and the 1979 banquet was exceptionally so.



Ernst and Ruth Harder. Ernst led us in the invocation and invited us to join in a familiar German table prayer at the close.



*Nancy B. Holland, who reminisced about the tales her grandmother told her, posed happily with Adam Giesinger who was re-elected **AHSOR** President.*



*David and Lydia Miller, always special because he was **AHSGR's** first president and must be credited with leading us to make this society a reality, are obviously enjoying the evening.*



Ruth K. Stoll presided at the banquet. At this moment she listens intently to Alexander Dupper who had us spellbound with his personal account of life in Russia.



Peter Pauls, Jr. all the way from Witmarsum, Brazil, was our special guest at the convention. An exciting speaker, he held our total attention while relating his remembrances of how his parents viewed Russia. Alexander Dupper is at his right. Following the address Jacob Michel of Saginaw presented Rev. Pauls with one of his beautiful and now famous wood carvings.

ECUMENICAL SERVICE

The two following addresses entitled "We Honor Our Heritage Through Faith" carried forward what has become a tradition at AHSGR conventions. After all the business is over, we bring to a close five days of fellowship, research, and learning more and more about our heritage. We pause before going our separate ways for an hour of worship to pay tribute to our forefathers and to give thanks for the rich heritage that is ours. Our ecumenical service, always on the same theme, is one more "tie that binds" us together. As we say our farewells afterward we also say, "God willing, I'll see you next year."

WE HONOR OUR HERITAGE THROUGH FAITH

Emil J. Roleder

Tracing our heritage back to the beginning of that life of the first immigrants in Russia, we find that while they were of different faiths, the difficult beginning, slow development, hostile surroundings, and struggle for survival were mutual, and shared by all alike, despite the denomination.

Well do the words of the hymn "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" apply here: "Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one. Our comforts and our cares."

But there was another treasure that sustained them in their struggles and loneliness when their thoughts were still lingering and their minds wandering back to the Fatherland. This treasure is understood better in the context of their religious life.

When these immigrants left their German homeland, they brought with them a treasure, the seed of the Gospel of Salvation, deeply implanted in their hearts by their mother churches. They carried it into the vast regions of the Russian Empire. It was the treasure of which our Lord says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

The circumstances under which the colonists emigrated from their homeland were very restrictive. They could not carry with them anything which was not absolutely essential.

But what all did bring along—and under no circumstances would have left behind—was their German Bible, catechism, and hymnal (*Die Bibel, Der Catechismus, und Das Gesangbuch*). Just like back home, they followed their custom in the new land, carrying their books in serving their spiritual needs, even if only in a temporary way, until much later when formal services were available.

By the grace of God they faithfully safeguarded, nurtured, and passed this treasure from generation to generation as a sacred trust. Well do I remember our family devotions, kneeling around the breakfast table, Father leading in prayer.

I wish to add one more element here. I believe that one factor that helped them safeguard their heritage was that the German population jealously maintained their language, national identity, culture, and customs, mainly through their own system of parochial schools and churches. While always on friendly terms with their Russian neighbors, they seldom intermixed socially and rarely intermarried. They adhered to their tradition to the very last.

And so from a small beginning the churches in Russia developed into strong, well-organized Communions of Saints, built on Christ as its one and only foundation. They were sustained by the Holy Spirit during the days of their beginning, in prosperity, and eventually through their stormy years of revolution, persecution, harassment, and ultimate doom.

We have reports that even though they have been exiled from their homes, possessions, and churches to far-off Siberia and central Asia, the Church of Christ is living on in their hearts and most of them are allowed to have worship services. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

Truly we have all reason to honor our heritage through faith. The faith remains.

WE HONOR OUR HERITAGE THROUGH FAITH

Peter Pauls

Dear friends, brethren and sisters in the Christian faith, let us continue this service this Sunday morning in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the name of God, and in the name of the Holy Spirit, *Lob, Ehre, Preis, und Anbetung sei unser Gott!*

It's my prayer and my wish that everyone at our convention could meet Jesus this morning, and He would tell you what you have to do.

In this hour of prayer and worship, let us read the word of God as found in Psalm 107, verses 1-8:

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good;
his love endures forever.
Let the redeemed of the Lord say this—
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,
Those he gathered from the lands,
from the east and west, from north and south.

Some wandered in desert wastelands,
finding no way to a city where they could settle.
They were hungry and thirsty,
and their lives ebbed away. —
Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
He led them by a straight way
to a city where they could settle.
Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love
and his wonderful deeds for men.

As we look back through the pages of the past, say the last fifty years, it has been an unbelievably dramatic story. Those among us who were in Russia before and after World War II and those who now live in the free western world feel like burning brands snatched from the flames. How many millions of people, fathers, mothers, grandparents, and children were crushed under the steamroller of war? Others were driven from their homes, were persecuted or put to death. Why? Were they criminals? No, they were people like you and me. They were our people, who had devoted heart and soul to Russia's development.

Psalm 107 calls us to give thanks: "Give thanks to the Lord . . ." Why? Because God frees us from sin and guilt; he gives us a new life; he makes us free. We become God's people. This is a reason to be thankful.

Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and man. In verse two we read, "whom he has redeemed and gathered from the lands. . . they were **hungry** and thirsty." Didn't we hunger and thirst? During 1921-2 when there was no harvest in Russia people died of hunger. As God led Israel through the Red Sea and through the desert, so also he has led us thus far. Through many lands and over seas and oceans God has led us. That is the reason for us to be thankful. "Give thanks to God and do not forget his mercies toward you." Today we are prosperous. Let us not forget those who are still unfortunate and exploited,

The following story was told to me by a friend who fled from Russia as a boy. It was 1945 and Berlin was encircled by the Russians. Then the refugees prayed, as never before in their lives, to be allowed to reach freedom. And then a miracle happened. They came out into the western world. They cried out to the Lord in their troubles, and he delivered them from their distress.

Today we have a good life. Let us not forget what God has done for us. Offer thanks to God and remember the days of the Lord.

To honor our heritage through faith means to do something for your Lord, for your Savior. Many Christians are lazy people. They go to church, but they are too lazy to do work for God. They are like the crowds at a Brazilian football game who sit in the stands crying for victory—but themselves doing nothing to attain it.

Moses urges Israel to "Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you" (Deuteronomy 32:7). Remember the past. I am glad that the American **Historical** Society of **German**s from Russia is carrying out this task. This is an occasion to meet people, to have fellowship, to exchange ideas, to remember the past, but above all it

should be a time of serious consideration of the implications and meaning of the past and the future. In your heart must arise the question, "Lord, what have I to do?"

To the young people and to the children Moses says, "Ask your father and he will tell you. Your elders will tell you." Nothing is more tragic than to grow up without a sense of history. Let us tell our children; let us tell them the way it was. Let us tell them that God leads his people. Let us tell them that God is a God of miracles.

We think today of those who risked their lives for the sake of the common good. We think of the leaders and ministers who had the opportunity to flee to safety, and chose instead to remain and suffer with the flock.

Thinking and remembering leads us to doing. "Give thanks to God and fulfill your vows," that is those vows that you made when you were in despair. Help others who need your help. I call to mind the Vietnamese refugees in our days.

More than fifty years ago, my parents arrived in Brazil. For many years our people could not understand why God had led them to the jungles of Brazil. But now they understand. We are helping thousands of poor, helpless people. In the children's home, we care for and nurture orphans and children without homes. In a clinic in the area of the Amazon hundreds of people sick with malaria and worm infestations are cared for. This tremendous work of the Mennonite Association for Social Assistance is made possible through the help of voluntary workers. The challenge is to our people who need no help themselves to help others, the Indians, colored peoples, and others.

Dear friends, let us learn to give to others and to help those who beg for our assistance, for a piece of bread or a handful of rice. Let us not forget God's goodness and mercy towards us, "He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle. Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men" (Psalm 107:7-S).

He, our God, has led us and guided us. You to North America, us to South America. Today our Lord is asking you, "What are you doing with your freedom, with your time, with your talents, with your money?" Some of us are only waiting for retirement and our pensions. Let us be aware that when we are serving our God there is no pension, no retirement. We have to work until the coming of the Lord. Let us put all that we have at God's disposal, for he tells us very clearly, "All this I did for you. What are you doing for me?"

Give thanks, remember, and let's be obedient to our Lord in our testimony, in our faith.

Another outstanding program at the convention was given by Lewis R. Marquardt of Phoenix, Arizona. His slide presentation, "Metal Grave Markers in Emmons County, North Dakota" was an expanded version of his article on this topic in the AHSGR Journal, Vol. II No. 1 (Spring, 1979) pp. 18-26.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ruth M. Amen

This past year is the first that AHSGR has had an executive director. This move has freed the president of the management duties at international headquarters. As time goes on it will be possible for the president to spend more time on the program and policy aspects of AHSGR, such as providing for continuing historical research and the development of further services for our membership.

Today and tomorrow you will be receiving a number of reports that will tell you of the phenomenal growth of genealogical services, the steady increase in our research capabilities, the additions to our valuable collection of archival materials.

*Ruth M. Amen
Executive Director*

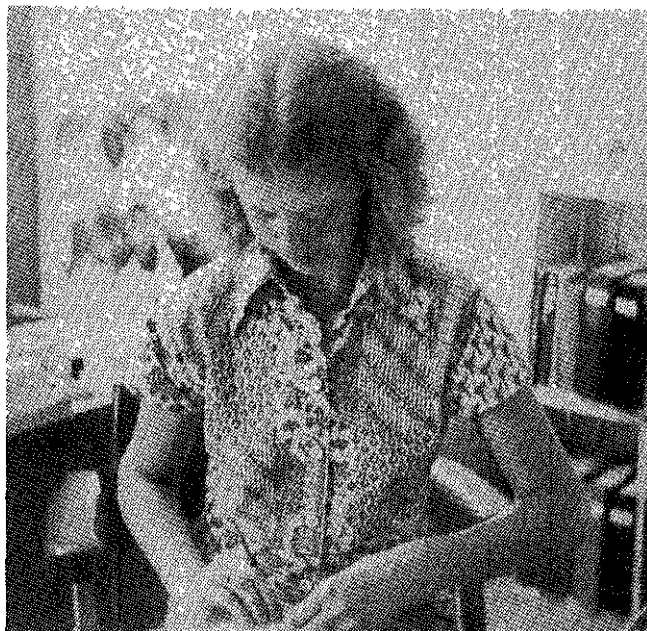


These things do not happen by accident. They are deliberately planned in board meetings, for example, that are in themselves very carefully planned by the president and your executive director. Board members are a dedicated, serious, hard working group of individuals who, you might say, pay for the privilege to work for AHSGR.

To keep pace with this growth, our staff at headquarters has also grown. There is, as already noted, the "part-time" executive director who spends 40-60 hours per week on the job.



1/0 Ann Kuhr



Linda A. Lange

In late January we hired an administrative assistant, Jo Ann Kuhr, who has been an enormous asset to us. Jo Ann is a graduate of the University of Colorado and received her M.A. from there. She formerly taught German and has been a tremendous help in translating and responding to letters that were at one time difficult to handle. Jo Ann has learned so much about the history of our people that many assume she is a German from Russia herself.

Our other full-time employee is Linda Lange, our senior secretary and headquarters accountant. She has been with us since 1974. She handles all the funds that arrive at headquarters. She keeps up the membership files with the accuracy that would vie with any computer. Linda also keeps track of inventory and fills all orders. Added to her duties the past two years has been the handling of contributions to the International Foundation.

We also have a quarter time librarian, Frances Amen, at headquarters who keeps up with the organizing into a verticle file, all indexed, the countless historical materials which you people and others all over the United States and Canada send us.

But these people I've mentioned are but a few of the people who work at headquarters. Members who live in and near Lincoln spend literally many hundreds of man-hours in and around your international office. They are the volunteers without whom we could not survive. Their pay is a roll and a cup of coffee and fellowship. They file genealogy group records, they mount and organize obituaries, they keep up the grounds, they help proof read our publications, they transport tons of mail to the post office after a crew has stuffed the envelopes that bring you *the Journal*, *Clues*, and the *Newsletters*.

The foregoing has been related in rather general terms. Let me give you a few facts and figures.

In the past seven weeks, which in some ways was a rather average period in the year we have received at headquarters 1,206 pieces of mail, an average of 30 pieces a day. Some letters contain new memberships, some include orders for books and maps, many ask help with genealogical research and translation. Some letters thank us for help we give them, some give us the dickens and there are many that have just heard about AHSGR and are interested in joining. We are constantly amazed when these come from an area where we have a long established chapter.

What about mail going out? There were 1,270 such pieces in that 7 week period. Comprising this total were: 456 first class letters 270 packages, 368 packets to new members and late renewals, and 176 miscellaneous packets to board members, chapters, etc.

There are other activities that take our time at headquarters.

1. We ride herd on the printer—taking the entire responsibility for the publication of *Clues*— after receiving the material to be included. We write the *Newsletter*, and follow it through the printing process. The final steps in the production of the *Journal* are also ours.
2. We have many visitors with whom we work on their historical research.
3. We work with students not only at the University in Lincoln but through correspondence in many schools throughout the country.
4. And, there are many requests to speak to groups—service clubs, school groups and social organization.

What's ahead for AHSGR that relates to our headquarters management and activity?

1. We are investigating the advisability of computerizing our membership information. We would like to be able to give more frequent and more prompt services related to membership to our chapters.
2. We have several new publications on the docket. The production of these will require our attention.
3. Chapter organization is a priority which will mean more travel and visitation in areas where local groups are waiting for assistance.

Yes, the months and years ahead promise much work and excitement for all of us in AHSGR not only at headquarters but all around the continent.

THE AHSGR SECRETARY'S REPORT

Sally Hieb

The Board of Directors of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia met on Monday and Tuesday of this week here in Seattle, prior to the convention. In addition your board has met four times since the convention in Lincoln last year. The first meeting was a post-convention meeting held in Lincoln. It was an organizational meeting at which time Dr. Adam Giesinger was elected as President of the Board, and Ruth Amen was named as our first Executive Director.

In September the board met in Denver, Colorado. Time was spent going over financial reports, discussing plans for this convention in Seattle, working on memberships, chapter organization, growth of the genealogy material, archives acquisitions, headquarters staffing, Foundation progress, and publications. Decisions were made on reprinting of a number of publications, on microfilming of materials, and of course there was the ever-present concern of inflation and the resultant spiraling costs of publications, postage, etc. Committee assignments for each board member were finalized. A highlight of this meeting was a visit to the Greeley Public Library which houses the AHSGR Archives. The entire board profited greatly by this experience of examining our Archives material.

Our third meeting was held in Phoenix, Arizona in February. In addition to the usual long agenda of business, tentative outlines and schedules for this convention were approved, the sites for the 1980 convention were considered. Reprinting of publications, new maps, translations, and obtaining rights to publications were discussed. The importance of keeping abreast with legal and technical rights to publications and copyrights was considered. The most urgent needs were money, staff, and the pressing need for a new and larger headquarters building. The Board was happy to have Mrs. JoAnn Kuhr join the staff at headquarters to help with the tremendous volume of work there.

The fourth meeting of the year was held in Lincoln, Neb. in April. In addition to the routine agenda, much time was spent discussing a new Headquarters Building, with the committee reporting to the board their findings on sites best suited to our needs.



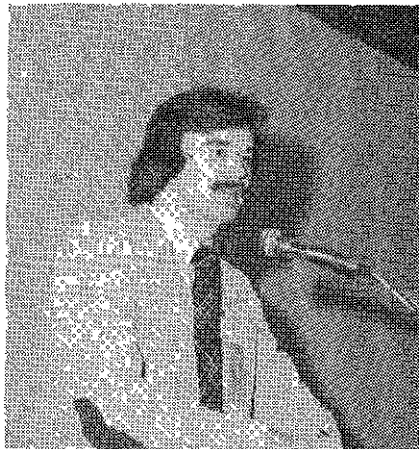
Sally Hieb summarizes board activities for the past year.

It continues to be a source of amazement to observe the great distance that board members travel and the time they are willing to give to attend these meetings. It is gratifying to see this devotion. Average attendance this past year has been 21.5 persons per meeting, with members coming from Manitoba and Alberta in Canada, California, S. Dakota, Colorado, Michigan, Virginia, Missouri, No. Dakota, Arizona, Washington, and Nebraska. They do this without remuneration of any sort—no airfare, gas mileage, motel room, or meal expenses are paid. So membership on the board not only takes time, but costs money. It is truly a labor of love.

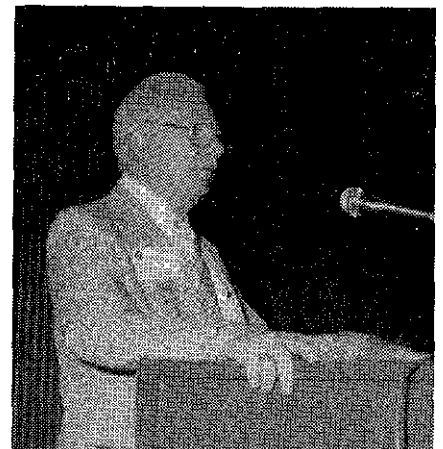
COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN



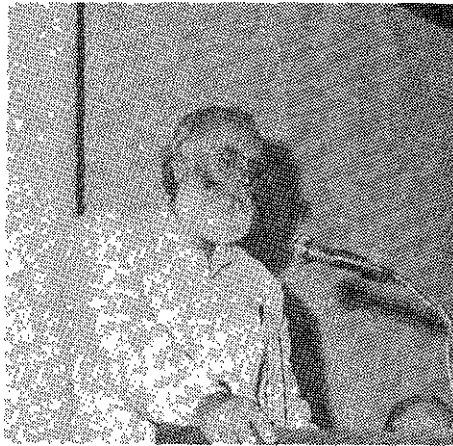
Jake Sinner
Nominating



Timothy J. Kloberdanz
Folklore



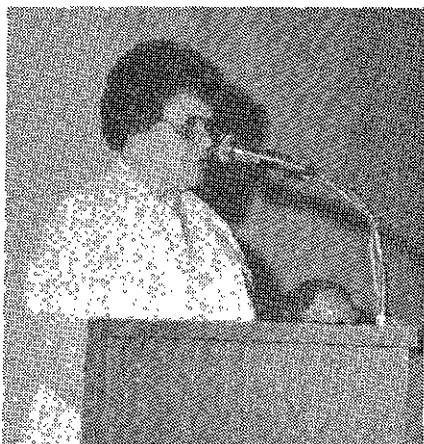
Arthur E. Flegel
Genealogy



Charles Gebhardt
Linguistics



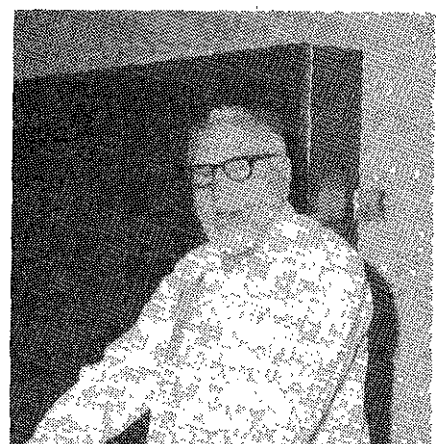
Mane Olson
Archives



Elsie Whittington
Membership



Emma S. Haynes
Research



Herman Wildermuth
Translations

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

Ruth K. Stoll, Chairman

Steady growth in the number of chapters equals growth in membership; conversely, membership growth makes possible the prospect of chapter chartering. At this convention four new chapters will be receiving their charters.

The requirements are simple:

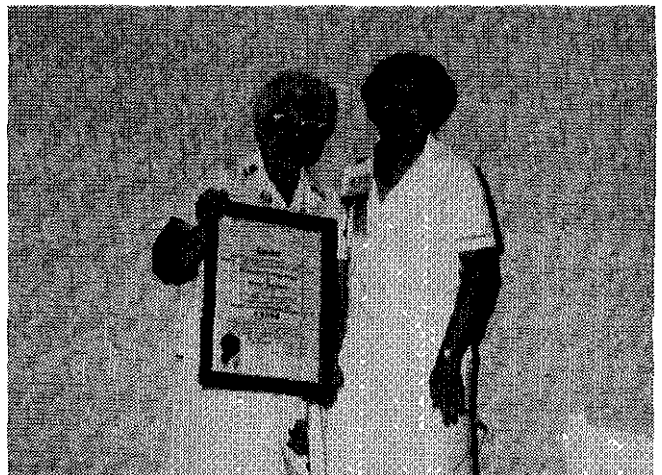
1. There must be 15 memberships in the local area.
2. Membership in the chapter is contingent upon membership in AHSGR.
3. The purposes as stated in the chapter bylaws must be compatible with those of international AHSGR.

Each of you can be the spark plug to start a new chapter in your area and we urge you to do just that. With 36 chapters currently chartered I look for continued growth and the prospect of an optimistic 50 by next year at this time.

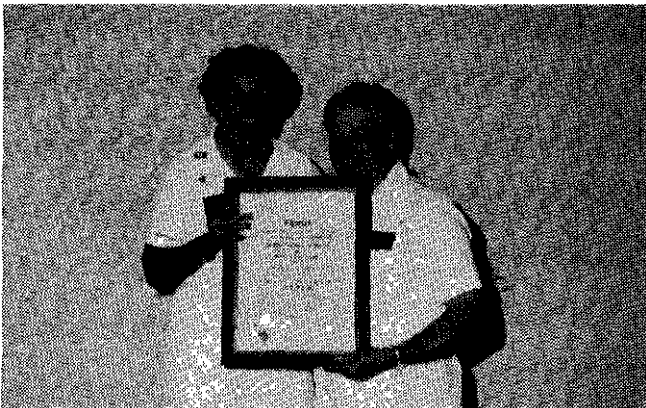
Charters for four chapters organized since the last convention were presented by Ruth K. Stoll at the traditional Fellowship Breakfast



Martha Issinghoff, president of the Golden Wheat Chapter in Kansas, receives their charter.



Accepting the charter is Hilda Gregory, president of Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter in the Milwaukee area.



Reuben Goertz who is very pleased to have a chapter in South Dakota accepts the charter for the Center of the Nation Chapter in Belle Fourche.

The Greater Sheboygan Area Chapter charter is received by member, Carl Weber, Jr.

FOLKLORE COMMITTEE

Timothy J. Kloberdanz, Chairman

Last Wednesday morning, fourteen individuals attended a special breakfast meeting of the AHSGR Folklore Committee. At that time, those in attendance discussed our progress, as well as our committee's immediate and long range objectives.

Recently, our efforts were given a healthy shot in the arm when the AHSGR Foundation made a grant for the specific purpose of conducting folklore-related research among Germans from Russia in three areas of the Midwestern United States and Canada. The results of this research eventually will be published by the Society.

Presently, the most important means of folklore dissemination is the Folklore Forum which appears annually in the AHSGR Journal. Future topics for the Forum were discussed at last Wednesday's meeting and potential subjects include: folk tales, weather beliefs and weatherlore, nicknames, and folk religion. There was considerable interest in German riddles and this important aspect of our oral tradition will be the topic for next year's Folklore Forum.

Due to unusually good response to our appeal for proverbs and proverbial expressions, plans are now underway to publish a special monograph on the proverbs of the Germans from Russia. This will be the first in what we hope will be a series of individual folklore publications by the Society.

Our committee would like to make the following recommendations to accelerate our efforts in preserving and recording the folklore of Germans from Russia:

1. That our present AHSGR Archives be expanded to include the separate listing of folkloristic materials such as record albums and tapes.
2. That all individual chapters of AHSGR appoint a folklore chairman who will coordinate research activities at the regional level.
3. That we explore the possibility of eventually producing filmstrips documenting various aspects of our heritage such as folk crafts and the preparation of traditional foods.
4. That we also explore the possibility of producing record albums that include representative folk stories in dialect, tongue twisters, songs and other examples of our rich oral tradition.
5. That we devote special consideration to the eventual publication of a much-needed volume—similar to our present cookbook—tentatively entitled *A Treasury of Germans from Russia Folklore*—which would include illustrative examples of many different types of folklore and which would reflect the diverse geographical; religious, and linguistic backgrounds of all the major German speaking groups from Russia.

GENEALOGY COMMITTEE

Arthur E. Flegel, Chairman

It has been another banner year for the AHSGR Genealogy Committee. Participation of members submitting genealogical data has been so active that our files of information have continued to increase substantially.

Our publication, *Clues*, has grown to the extent that we will be obliged to publish two issues this year instead of the customary one. The second volume is scheduled for printing in September. We are more than pleased with the genealogical content of the articles submitted for the 1979 edition of *Clues*. The Surname Exchange lists some 1200 researchers engaged in investigating over 6,000 individual surnames. This is highly indicative of the rapidly growing interest of genealogy within our society.

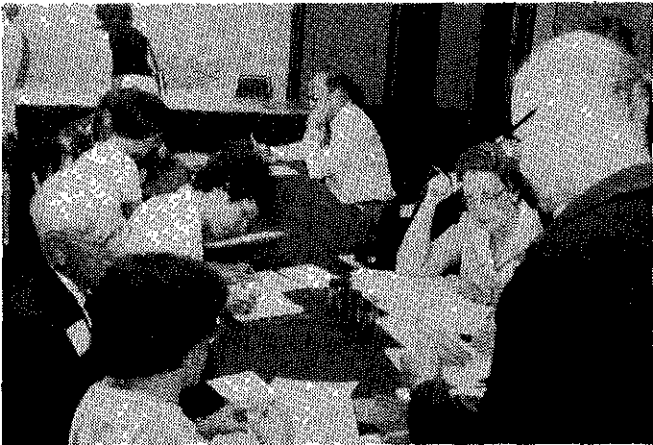
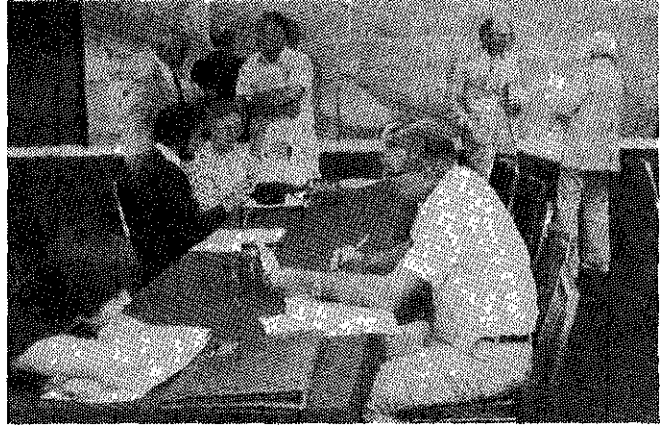
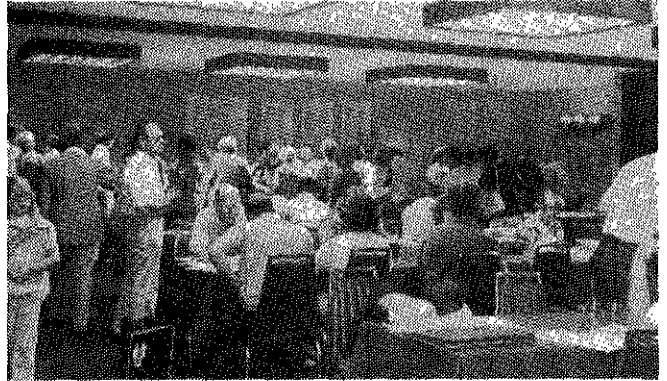
The listings in *Clues* of family names common to villages in both the Black Sea and Volga Regions are of great benefit to member researchers who are uncertain regarding the location from where in Russia their people actually emigrated. Individuals and interested groups are going to great lengths to expand upon this meaningful activity. One group under direction of Jean A. Roth of Seattle, Washington, has advanced to the point where they are publishing a pamphlet entitled *Unsere Leute Von Walter* (Our People Of Walter) that emphasizes the history and inhabitants of the village, Walter, on the Bergseite of the Volga River. We urge other groups to share this enthusiasm for their ancestral villages which will help them and all of us to learn more about the culture of our German people in the various areas of Russia.

THE CONSULTING WORKSHOPS

The consulting workshops in genealogy and translations were a popular part of the convention. Members found much help in the extensive files of family records, obituaries, special maps and resource library. There was always a long line to the copier which made it possible to duplicate those special discoveries which AHSGR has amassed for researchers. More than 1,500 pounds of genealogical materials had been shipped to Seattle. Arthur E. Flegel, Genealogy Chairman, and Herman D. Wildermuth, Translations Chairman, with JoAnn Maul, the workshop chairman along with Renee Kinnear, Betty Schmoll and others who volunteered were busy until the wee hours of the morning helping those who were seeking to fill in the gaps in their ancestral charts.

The workshop and the special genealogy sessions made this a convention not only rich in historical presentations but also strong in its opportunities for genealogical research.

The special addresses on genealogy will be printed in the Part 2, 1979 Edition of *Clues*.



We want to especially recognize those individuals who have provided valuable and much appreciated help with the preparation of the Obituary and Genealogy Card Files. Among the ones who have placed special emphasis on preparation of obituary cards during recent months are: Erwin Ulmer, Frances Amen, Edward Deines, Mollie Kaiser, and John Muhlbeier of Lincoln, Nebraska, Ann Reisbick, Gerda Walker, Marie Olson and Mary Mills of Denver, Colorado, Ethel Lock, Russell, Kansas, Milbert Holzwarth, Portland Oregon, Harold and Jennie Haase, Casa Grande, Arizona, Ardella Bennett, Richfield, Minnesota, Victor Bohnet, Calgary, Alberta and Kennit Karns, Kansas City, Missouri. Those who have helped immeasurably as volunteer typists transcribing information from members charts to the genealogy cards are: Carolyn Carmony, Alexandria, Virginia, Shirley Clausen, San Leandro, California, Beatrice Colvin, Leavenworth, Washington, Louise C. England, Midland, Texas, Jeanene Euhus, Yuma, Arizona, Emil Peil, Menio Park, California, Janet Fiore, Manteca, California, Harriet Gettman, Modesto, California, Marlyse Goozey, Issaquah, Washington, Jan Gladney, Raytown, Missouri, Rosemary Haar, Delano, California, Mary Martini, Dearborn, Michigan, Barbara Muller, Delavan, Wisconsin, Sara Frank Neal, Walla Walla, Washington, Sharon Nelson, Bloomington, Indiana, Betty Renfro, Cheyenne, Wyoming, Bunnie Runman, Montrose, Minnesota, Vikilyn Strong, Salt Lake City, Utah, Kathy Waltz, Auburn, California and Lauretta Krebs-Wilson, Sacramento, California. High commendations and accolades need be extended to all volunteers which, of course, includes many who have in other ways also contributed so much to the development and growth of the genealogical effort of the Society.

It is noteworthy that researchers are regularly visiting and using the files at AHSGR Headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska and the Genealogy Committee Office in Menio Park, California. The duplicate files are presently able to boast obituary and genealogy cards exceeding the 40,000 figure in each of the locations. We cannot stress too strongly the value of these research tools and the benefit they are to many researchers. We cordially invite others who may be willing to share of their time and talents for the genealogical work of the Society to let us know what their particular areas of preference might be.

Due to the extensive requests for research help and translations that continually come to Headquarters and your Genealogy Chairman, the AHSGR Board of Directors has instituted a formula of nominal charges for these services with the exception that the first translation or request for information shall be performed on a no charge basis.

To supplement the genealogy card files, your committee has procured a number of resource books in both English and German texts to provide more detailed information about the areas and villages in Russia as well as Germany from where our ancestors originally emigrated. We are still in process of collecting the German Congregational Church publication, *Der Kirchenbote*, with the prospect of eventually having bound volumes for all the years of its existence.

This marks the third convention where we have provided a Consulting Genealogy Workshop and it is again creating tremendous excitement. A number of volunteers are serving as a staff eager to help those needing research assistance.

The Genealogy Committee as set up by AHSGR President, Dr. Adam Giesinger, is comprised of the following: Arthur E. Flegel, Chairman, Victor Bohnet, Kermit Kams, Ann Reisbick, Elsie Whittington, and Gerda Walker.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE REPORT

Marie M. Olson, Chairman

The number of additions to the Archives and the demand for service continued to grow. Since June of 1978, 173 new items have been added and space to house further additions is becoming very limited. 347 items were sent out on interlibrary loan, 21 reference questions have been answered by mail and, on the average, two persons a week use the collection at Greeley.

Miss Esther Fromm, the Archivist, reports that most individuals requesting information want answers to genealogical questions thinking that, with a few questions, their whole family history can be produced. She is trying to index some of the family histories which the Archives has, but has neither the staff nor time for much of that.

Through many hours of work on the part of numerous devoted people, and at considerable expense, the Society has attempted to provide the membership with aids to help them find materials. I refer to 1) the *Bibliography of the AHSGR Archives and Historical Library*, published in 1976 with many annotations giving clues to the content of items. A supplement to it, listing materials acquired since then, is now being

prepared by Mrs. Emma Haynes. 2) All members receive *Clues* annually, which lists not only names but has useful articles for those seeking genealogical help. 3) Published in the Journal are the *Queries* and *Surname Exchange* sections and *Passenger Lists*. 4) At Headquarters are the genealogical and obituary card files. 5) Last year an index to articles in all of the *Work Papers* was also published and mailed to members. Making use of these tools will lessen the frustrations of members and save the time of the genealogy volunteers and of the Archives and Headquarters staffs.

Again, as in past years, I wish to extend to Miss Esther Fromm and her staff many thanks on behalf of all members for their continued service to AHSGR.

LINGUISTICS COMMITTEE REPORT

Charles L. Gebhardt, Chairman

The following sentences are standardized sentences used by students from Leningrad University to gather linguistic material in the German colonies as early as 1924.

To use them in 1979, you should have a cassette tape recorder and an informant (perhaps yourself) who, ideally, grew up in a German colony in Russia, married a person from the same colony and upon coming to the U.S. or Canada lived in a neighborhood composed of persons from the same colony. This situation is ideal for our purposes but is, unfortunately, rare.

First, set up and turn on the tape recorder and fill in the blanks on the attached data form. In this way we will have both the written data and the taped voice of the informant.

Next, read the sentences slowly in English and wait for the informant to translate them to dialect. If you know the dialect word the informant is searching for you may prompt him or her but try to avoid interrupting them.

After the initial recording, wait at least 24 hours and have the informant give the sentences in dialect again-recording them a second time of course. This will give us two chances to get the dialect recorded.

Use the tape that remains to engage the informant in casual conversation (in dialect of course). You might ask about your family, house styles, house furnishings, church festivals, threshing, etc.

Then send the cassette and data form to:

Dr. Charles L. Gebhardt
5822 Our Way
Citrus Heights, Cal. 95610

A copy of the cassette will be made and the original returned to you if you so indicate.

The Wenckerschen Sentences

1. In the winter the dry leaves fly around in the air.
2. It quickly stops snowing, then the weather becomes better again.
3. Put coal in the stove so that the milk cooks.
4. The good old man drove with the horse and broke through the ice.
5. He died four to six weeks ago.
6. The fire was too strong, the coffee cake burned all black on the bottom.
7. He always eats the eggs without salt or pepper.
8. My feet hurt, I think I've walked them through. 9. I was by the woman and told her and she said she would also tell her daughter. 10. I will never do it again.
11. I'll hit you soon with the cooking spoon, you monkey.
12. Where are you going? Should we go with you?
13. These are bad times.
14. My dear child, standing down there and the mean goose will bite you to death.
15. You learned the most today and were good. You may go home earlier than the others.
16. You are not yet old enough to drink a bottle of wine. You first have to grow a bit and become larger.
17. Go, be so good, and tell your sister she should finish sewing the clothes for her mother.

DATA FORM

Name:

Last

First Maiden

Age:

Village of Birth:

check one

Black Sea Area,

Volga

Volhynia.

Other.

If other identify,;

Date of birth,;

Length of time informant lived in village of birth:

Other villages lived in:

length of time.

Where did informant settle upon coming to the US or Canada.

How long_____ Other towns in which informant has lived

how long

Village from which spouse of informant came: Area:

Black Sea.

Volga _

Volhynia.

Other.

If other, identify.

Name of person submitting the tape:. Address:

Editor's Note: Copies on this form may be obtained from AHSGR Headquarters, 631 D Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Elsie I. Whittington, Chairman

Convention Time! What an exciting time it is! We review and renew our membership plans and goals. Perhaps the increase in our dues necessitated by rising costs has been a factor in some of the slow renewals. However, when reviewing the increase in memberships we are reminded of what a genuine bargain it really is.

I believe it bears repeating. Regardless of the month you join AHSGR, your dues always become payable on January 1. The reason, of course, is that you receive all *Journals*, *Clues* and *Newsletters* or any other materials that have been sent earlier in the year.

The need for continuous growth in our membership is so important. Also necessary is that our youth become active participants. We need their vitality and enthusiasm. We're not forgetting our elders either. Their wisdom, knowledge and experiences have made our heritage. It's up to all of us to seek and find relatives, friends and acquaintances who should be members of our society. Are you helping?

Now let's take a look at the statistics:

A comparison of membership totals;

June 12, 1979	3,952
June 6, 1978	3,743 (4,285 on December 31, 1978)
June 1, 1977	2,717
June 8, 1976	2,173

A comparison of membership groupings:

	<u>6-1-77</u>	<u>6-6-78</u>	6-12-79
New Members			
Life Members	569	1,082*	624
\$25 Supporting	50	69**	
\$50 Contributing	50+	57	102
\$100 Sustaining	1++	20	79x
\$ 12 Renewals	1	2,530***	50
Exchange	2,047	4	3,141xx
Total	<u>4</u>		4
	2,717	3,743	3,952

+ 4 of these are new and counted above

++ This is a new membership and counted above

* 16 of these are library memberships

** 1 is a new member

*** 30 of these are library memberships

x 3 are new members and counted above

xx 50 of these are library memberships

Non-Renewals

<u>6-1-77</u>	<u>6-6-78</u>	6-12-79
26S		
<u>184</u>	252	951
452	196	735
	448	216

In Chapter Areas Outside Chapter Areas

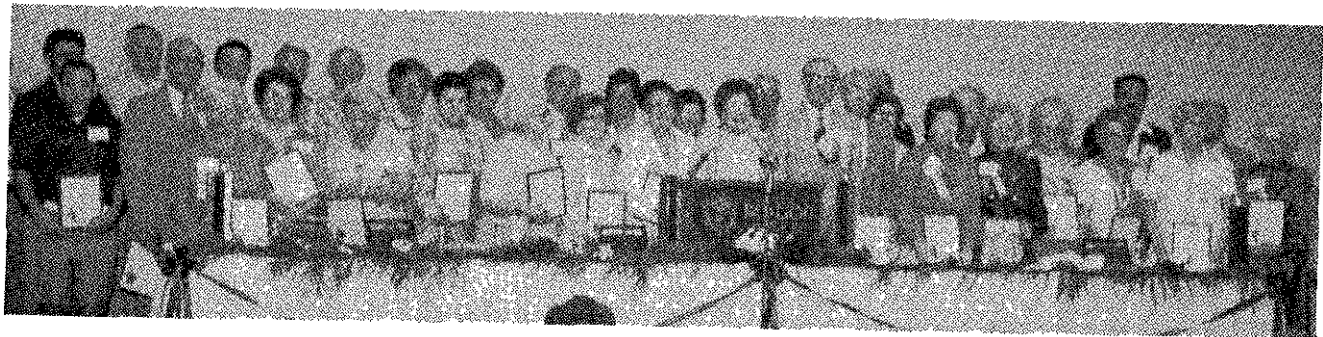
10 States with the most memberships:

	<u>6-6-78</u>	<u>6-12-79</u>
1. California		
2. Nebraska	746	767
3. Colorado	520	508
4. Washington	524	485
5. Kansas	336	406
6. Michigan	235	298
7. Oregon	230	215
8. Wisconsin	205	212
		114

9. Montana	78	75
10. Illinois		74
5 States leading in new memberships:		
1. California	160	106
2. Washington	134	101
3. Kansas	48	55
4. Nebraska	110	50
5. Colorado	101	50

Memberships in **AHSGR** come from 47 states and 5 Canadian provinces as well as 10 foreign countries. An analysis of the life memberships shows 21 chapters with at least one. The Lincoln, Nebraska Chapter leads with 26, Northern Colorado Chapter has 10 and Greater Seattle and Central California Chapter each have 7. One life member resides in Spain, We anticipate a substantial growth in life memberships at this convention.

We again encourage every member to consider himself or herself to be a member of the Membership Committee.



Above: Life members display their certificates. Left: The Fellowship Breakfast had Lew Marquardt, President of the Arizona Sun Chapter, presiding. Elsie Whittington (far left) presented life membership certificates. Ruth K. Stoll recognized AHSGR's four new chapters.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

Emma Schwabenland Haynes, Chairman

At the Research Committee meeting, a discussion was held on the writing of family histories. It was pointed out that reader interest would be increased if an introductory chapter were included on the colony in Russia from which the family came. Pictures are of great importance and it is urged that they be put in as well. The author should also tell about family experiences both in Russia and during the early years in North America.

Mrs. Haynes brought to the meeting several family histories which exemplified these characteristics, such as:

David Hoefel's *Hoefel Family Album* which was written in 1965, three years before our society was founded and describes the coming of Bessarabian Germans to Ritzville, Washington.

Susan M. Yungman's *Faith of Our Fathers* which tells of the arrival of Volga Germans to the onion fields of Pine Island, New York. The booklet is beautifully illustrated by drawings of Ann Yungman, sister of Susan.

Amy Brungardt Toepfer's *History of the Weigel Family* which contains a copy of the marriage certificate of Thomas Weigel to Barbara Bergel in Lubeck on October 12, 1765, before the couple left for Russia.

Arthur and Cleora Flegels *Reuscher-Schnell Kinship - A Century in America* telling of Cleora's ancestors from Norka, Russia,

Arthur Flegel's *Flegel-Pflugrath Kinship* with many interesting anecdotes of his Bessarabian and Caucasian ancestors.

In addition, approximately sixty other family histories have been sent to our archives in Greeley since 1976. They will be mentioned in a special section of the supplement to our bibliography which will be printed this coming winter.

Mrs. Gerda Walker then discussed the Hattie Plum Williams' 1914 census of the Russian German people in Lincoln, Nebraska. This census contains the names of all families living in Lincoln at that time and includes such questions as; the colony in Russia from which they came, the year of arrival in both the United States and in Lincoln, the number of children in the family, the number of rooms in their house, the occupation of the father and even what newspapers they read. The publication of this census will be of tremendous interest to countless Germans from Russia throughout the United States.

HELPS FOR YOUR RESEARCH

AHSGR has a number of bibliographies to aid you in your research. Check the list in your *Annotated Bibliography of Materials Available for Purchase*.

TRANSLATIONS COMMITTEE

Herman D. Wildermuth, Chairman

During the past year, the Translations Committee translated various items among which were: a stylized wedding invitation as made orally in the colonies, nine documents and certificates, thirty-five personal letters, a thirty-page booklet, and a number of documents direct from the Russian. At the present time we have several members who do Russian translations.

Several members also worked on projects such as family translations or for friends as well as some translations for articles in the *AHSGR Journal*. New Administrative Assistant, Jo Ann Kuhr, does translations at headquarters when Ruth Amen needs these. All of you know Lydia Miller, Emma Haynes, Nancy Holland, and Arthur Flegel, who do much translating on their own in addition to their many and varied activities.

I met with members and potential members of the committee and had a small group that helped with short translations at the consulting workshop sessions at this convention.

I have asked to not be considered for the Board of Directors this year to be able to spend more time on personal research (and home repair work). The Translations Committee chairmanship will be in capable hands and I'll be available to help, if necessary.

I have enjoyed the work immensely and hope that I will again have the opportunity to help after I get bored with the tedious every-day chores.

THE FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Gordon L. Schmidt

The Foundation is run by a 15 member board with 5 members elected annually for a three year term. The Foundation exists solely for the benefit of AHSGR and its members,

The purpose of the Foundation is to

1. raise money for the AHSGR
2. hold the assets of the Society
3. distribute funds as per policies of the board

Our cash position is approximately \$35,600.00. Total receipts in the last five years have totaled approximately \$50,000.00. A yearly financial report is available to all and is distributed to everyone present at the Foundation Luncheon.

Future objectives are:

1. to raise money for a headquarters building totaling \$300,000.00 in the next 3 years.
2. to raise funds for research grants,

This will be accomplished by:

1. personal letters to every member.
2. personal contact with those who request it and with those who indicate a great interest in the society and with those who have substantial funds for charitable giving.

Cash and pledges designated for the Headquarters Building Fund gathered at the Foundation Luncheon yesterday totaled \$39,746.50. Since then another \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 has been pledged.

We will be expecting to hear from all of you through out the coming year indicating your interest in preservation and promulgating your values as they relate to what can be accomplished through AHSGR.

REPORT OF THE AHSGR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Jake Sinner, Chairman

The bylaws of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia specify that the board of directors be comprised of thirty members, ten of whom are elected for a 3-year term at the annual meeting.

Terms of the following board members expire at this time:

Rachel Amen
Ruth M. Amen
Evelyn Cook
Reuben Goertz
Sally Hieb

Kermit Karns
Maire M. Olson
David Schletewitz
Gordon L. Schmidt
Herman D. Wildermuth

The Nominating Committee has obtained the consent of the following individuals to place their names in nomination for a 3-year term to the board of directors of AHSGR to serve from 1979-1982.

Evelyn Cook, Denver, Colorado
Alexander Dupper, Lodi, California
Reuben Goertz, Freeman, South Dakota
Sally Hieb, Henderson, Nebraska
Kermit Karns, Kansas City, Missouri

Lewis R. Marquardt, Phoenix, Arizona
Marie Olson, Denver, Colorado
Leona W. Pfeifer, Hays, Kansas
Dona Reeves, Buda, Texas
Gordon Schmidt, Henderson, Nebraska

Other members of the Nominating Committee were Mrs. Emma S. Haynes and Mrs. Mary Martini.

Editor's Note: The slate proposed by the Nominating Committee was elected unanimously. In the meeting of the newly-constituted Board of Directors which followed, officers were elected (see picture).



The AHSGR Board of Directors for 1979-1980.

Front row from left: Alex Dupper, Victor Bohnet, Vice-President Edward Schwartzkopf, President Adam Giesinger, Vice-President Arthur E. Flegel, Vice-President Reuben Goertz, Secretary Sally Hieb, Treasurer Ralph L. Giebelhaus.

Second row: Nancy Holland, Marie Olson, Evelyn Cook, Ann Reisbick, Mary Martini, Solomon R. Schneider, Michael Anuta, Executive Director Ruth M. Amen, Emma S. Haynes.

Third row: Timothy J. Kloberdanz, Monte W. Lung, Elsie I. Whittington, Alvin A. Kissler, General Counsel David J. Miller, Lewis R. Marquardt, Gordon L. Schmidt, Charles L. Gebhardt, Jake Sinner, Kermit B. Karns.

Not pictured are Leona Pfeifer, Dona B. Reeves, John C. Siemens, Ruth K. Stoll.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 1979 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

WHEREAS, we owe our growth and prosperity to our Heavenly Father, and WHEREAS, we are a religious people with appreciative hearts, BE IT RESOLVED: that we acknowledge His divine guidance and ask for His help in transmitting to future generations the Christian principles of the faith of past generations.

WHEREAS, AHSGR has pioneered the systematic and scholarly research and preservation of the history of the Germans from Russia and, WHEREAS, the success and acceptance of the initial goals has inspired the formation of similar groups with like objectives, BE IT RESOLVED: that AHSGR members strive individually and collectively to work in harmony and concert with those organizations in such manner as to bring respect to our forefathers and to AHSGR.

WHEREAS, the continued growth of AHSGR has caused an awesome burden of time and work to fall on our leader, and WHEREAS, Ruth Amen and Adam Giesinger have demonstrated the feasibility of responsible dual leadership, BE IT RESOLVED: that this, the 1979 International Convention of AHSGR, recognize their gracious and outstanding commitment to a successful transition and offer sincere gratitude for inspiration and harmonious leadership.

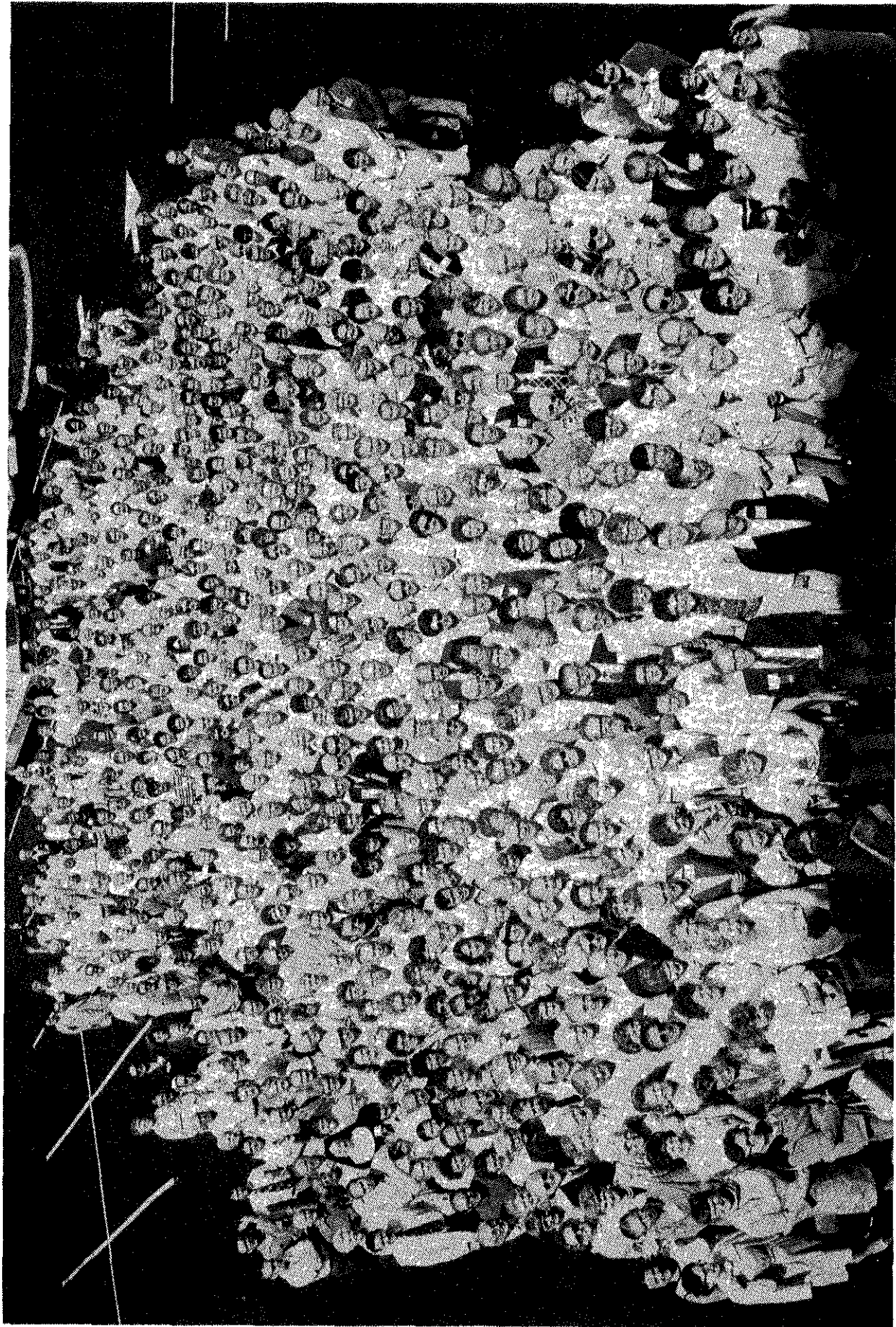
WHEREAS, the continued growth of AHSGR has dictated the need for a permanent headquarters building, and WHEREAS, the International Board of Directors has deemed it advisable to proceed with a feasibility study, BE IT RESOLVED: that we work in harmony to achieve this goal, sublimating our personal desires to the corporate decisions in such manner that our endeavors will reflect honor on our ancestors and ourselves.

WHEREAS, we have enjoyed hospitality and friendship, shared inspiration and enthusiasm here in Seattle, BE IT RESOLVED: that we extend our appreciation to Convention Chairperson Jean Roth and all the other members of the Greater Seattle Chapter for making this, the tenth convention, a memorable event.

WHEREAS, the International Board of Directors has decided to hold the 1980 convention in Dearborn, Michigan, BE IT RESOLVED: that all of us make plans to attend this convention to enjoy the fellowship and renew our commitment to AHSGR and its goals.

Resolutions Committee Reuben
Goetz, Chairman Mrs. Evenly
Cook Ralph L. Giebelhaus





*10th International Convention
American Historical Society of Germans from Russia
June 26/July 1, 1979*

Seattle, Washington

Sea-Tac Red Lion Motor Inn

PASSENGER LIST

Emma Schwabenland Haynes

October 24, 1876 Arrival in
New York *S.S. Mosel*
Bremen to New York

According to Richard Scheuerman, people given on this passenger list came primarily from the colonies of Neu Jagodnaja, Schoental, Schoenfeld, and Schoendorf on the Wiesenseite. These villages have been founded as daughter colonies of Jagodnaja Poljana and Pobotschnoje on the Bergseite. Since relatives named Ochs and Scheuerman had already arrived on the S.S. Ohio (see *Journal* Vol. I, No. 2, Winter, 1978, p. 72) and had settled near Otis, Kansas, most members also chose such towns as Otis, Pawnee Rock, and Great Bend on the border of Barton and Rush counties. Because of a series of poor harvests, four Scheierrmann brothers;

John, Conrad, Henry and George; Peter and Henry Ochs; and Henry Litzenberger; along with the family of Heinrich Green, who had come to the United States in January 1876, all decided to leave for the Pacific Northwest in 1881. They took the Union Pacific Railroad to San Francisco and arrived in Portland by steamship. From there they went on to the Palouse River area in Washington.

HERGERT

Philipp, 57, m, farmer
Anna, 57, f, wife
Adam, 22, m, child
Anna, 23, f, child
Catherina, 13, f, child
Adam, 1 mo., m, child

SCHEUERMANN

Heinrich, 39, m, farmer
Maria, 36, f, wife
Maria, 12, f, child
Catherjna, 9, f, child
Elisabeth, 7, f, child
Anna, 1 1/2, f, child
Elisabeth, 7 mo., f, child

SCHEIERMANN*

Elisabeth, 60, f, farmer? (none)
Johann, 40, m, wife? (farmer)
Anna, 40, f, wife
Catharina, 17, f, child
Johann, 4, m, child
Elisabeth, 3, f, child
Catherina Ells., 6 mo., f, child

SCHEIERMAN

Georg, 38, m, farmer
Marie, 35, f, wife
Philipp, 11, m, child
George, 5, m, child
Johannes, 6 mo., m, child

SCHEIERMAN

Heinrich, 32, in, farmer
Anna, 32, f, wife
Conrad, 12, m, child

*In America the name is also spelled Schierman.

SCHEIERMAN

Anna, 60, f, none
Georg, 27, m, farmer
Maria, 26, f, none
Martha, 18, f, none
Elisabeth, 9 mo., f, child
Marie Catherine, 5, f, child

KLEWNO

Heinrich, 44, m, farmer

Anna, 44, f, wife
Catharina, 17, f, child
Anna, 6, f, child

REPP

Heinrich, 24, m, fanner
Maria, 22, f, wife
Heinrich, 11 mo., m, child
Catherine, 12 days, f, child
(born at sea-Oct. 11)

KROM

Conrad, 40, m, farmer
Anna, 40, f, wife
Maria, 2, f, child
Catharina, 2 mo., f, child

KLEWNO

Philipp, 54, m, fanner
Anna, 54, f, wife
Johann, 26, m, farmer
Catharina, 26, f, wife
Johann, 11, m, child
Maria, 6, f, child
Catharina, 5, f, child
Peter, 4, m, child
Conrad, 6 mo., m, child

OCHS

Peter, 32, m, farmer
Catherine, 31, f, wife
Philipp, 12, m, child
Christine, 5, f, child
Heinrich, 4, m, child
Georg, 11 mo., m, child

JUNGSMANN

Peter, 46, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 44, f, wife
Johann, 11, m, child
Peter, 3, m, child
Maria, 7 mo., f, child

OTT

Conrad, 35, m, farmer
Anna, 30, f, wife
Conrad, 11, m, child
Catherine, 9, f, child
Philipp, 1 mo., m, child

KLEWENO

Christian, 34, m, farmer
Catharina, 30, f, wife
Maria, 12, f, child
Heinrich, 9, m, child
Peter, 10 mo., m, child
Johann, 11 days, m, child (born at sea Oct. 12)

WURZ

Philipp, 37, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 20, f, none
Maria, 30, f, wife
Anna, 4, f, child
Maria, 2, f, child
Elisabeth, 1 mo., f, child

APPEL

Conrad, 55, m, farmer
Margaretha, 55, f, wife
Georg, 31, m, farmer
Maria, 31, f, wife
Catharina, 16, f, servant
Georg, 6, m, child
Elisabeth, 3, f, child
Heinrich, 11 mo., m, child
Philipp, 18, m, child

BRACK

Johannes, 49, in, farmer
Justine, 46, f, wife
Philipp, 25, m, farmer
Christine, 23, f, wife
Heinrich, 20, m, farmer
Catherine, 19, f, none
Johann, 17, m, laborer
Peter, 12, m, none
Johannes, 9, m, child
Heinrich, 3, m, child
Catharine, 9, f, child

OCHS

Philipp, 49, m, farmer
Sophia, 45, f, wife
Philipp, 22, m, farmer
Sophia, 19, f, none
Maria, 17, f, none

SCHNEIDER

Georg, 21, m, farmer

Catharina, 19,f,wife

POPP
Peter, 29, m, farmer
Maria, 25, f, wife
Philipp, 5, m, child
Maria, 6 mo., f, child

OCHS
Peter, 28, m, farmer
Annette, 27, f, wife
Catherine, 5, f, child

SCHLEGEL
Heinrich, 40, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 35, f, wife
Konrad, 7, m, child
Heinrich, 4, m, child

KRIESS
Heinrich, 49, m, farmer
Maria, 46, f, wife
Conrad, 23, m, farmer
Sophie, 23, f, wife
Catherine, 19, f, none
Elisabeth, 17, f, none
Catherine, 15, f, none
Anna, 11, f, none
Marie, 9, f, child
Sophie, 2 mo., f, child

TIETZENBERGER (LITZENBERGER)
Heinrich, 28, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 27, f, wife
Johannes, 4, m, child
Conrad, 6 mo., m, child

GOETZ
Carl, 36, m, farmer
Maria, 34, f, wife

HARTMANN
Philipp, 50, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 41, f, wife
Johann, 19, m, none
Peter, 13, m, none
Heinrich, 9 m, child
Maria, 7, f, child
Wilhelm, 3, m, child
Conrad, 2 mo., m, child

WEIGAND
Johann, 44, m, farmer
Maria, 41, f, wife
Conrad, 9, m, child
Heinrich, 3, m, child
Maria, 6 mo., f, child

REPP
Heinrich, 26, m, farmer
Anna, 24, f, wife
Elisabeth, 60, f, none
Marie, 5, f, child
Johann, 2 mo., m, child
Heinrich, 2 mo., m, child

WEBER
Johann, 40, m, farmer
Marie, 35, f, wife
Catherine, 11 mo., f, child
Johann, 1 mo., m, child

SCHEIERMANN
Peter, 27, m, farmer
Anna, 28, f, wife
Peter, 6, m, child

Conrad, 4, m, child
Anna, 1 mo., f, child

SCHULZ (?)
Andreas, 28, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 28, f, wife
Johann, 5, m, child
Amalie, 3, f, child
Philipp, 11 mo., m, child
David, 21, m, farmer
Sophie, 18, f, wife

SCHNEIDER
Johann, 35, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 30, f, wife
Johann, 9, m, child
Heinrich, 5, m, child

SCHEIERMANN
Adam, 28, m, farmer
Catherine, 25, f, wife
Adam, 3, m, child
Maria, 6 mo., f, child

RUHL
Adam, 21, m, farmer
Catherine, 20, f, wife
Catherine, 2 mo., f, child

OCHS
Johannes, 52, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 54, f, wife
Catharina, 16, f, none
Elisabeth, 9, f, child
Conrad, 10, m, child

OCHS
Conrad, 28, m, farmer
Catherine, 28, f, wife
Peter, 8, m, child
Philipp, 4, m, child
Heinrich, 21, m, farmer
Magdalena, 21, f, wife
Georg, 6 mo., m, child
Heinrich, 6 mo., m, child

MORASCH
Heinrich, 52, m, farmer
Maria, 52, f, wife
Johann, 21, m, farmer
Conrad, 16, m, none

STANG
Johannes, 21, m, farmer
Maria, 19, f, wife
Maria, 2 mo., f, child

KLEWENO
Johannes, 21, m, farmer
Catharina, 18, f, wife
Catharina, 10 mo., f, child

WAGENER
Johannes, 30, m, farmer
Anna, 27, f, wife
Philipp, 8, m, child
Johann, 1 mo., m, child

SCHLAEGEL
Philipp, 34, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 32, f, wife
Conrad, 30, m, farmer
Anna, 38, f, wife
Catherine, 13 days, f, child
(born at sea Oct. 10)
Philipp, 22, m, farmer

George (?), 19, m, wife (?)
Heinrich, 16, m, none
Peter, 8, m, child
Johann, 11, m, child
Conrad, 1 mo., m, child
Maria, 7, f, child
Elisabeth, 9 mo., f, child

REPP
Adam, 58, m, farmer
Maria, 56, f, wife
Peter, 22, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 22, f, wife
George, 16, m, none

BRACK
Elisabeth, 56, f, none
Heinrich, 31, m, farmer
Maria, 29, f, wife
Peter, 20, m, farmer
Sophie, 19, f, none
(Peter and Sophie were married*)
Philipp, 13, m, child
Heinrich, 9, m, child
Peter, 7, m, child
Johannes, 4, m, child
Catherine, 2 mo., f, child

SCHEIERMANN
Adam, 36, m, farmer
Maria, 33, f, wife
Maria, 9, f, child
Johann, 8, m, child

SCHREINER
Johann, 36, m, farmer
Anna, 35, f, wife
Elisabeth, 7, f, child
Anna, 5, f, child
Catherine, 3, f, child
Georg, 1 mo., m, child

SCHLEGEL
Heinrich, 20, m, farmer

WAGNER
Melchior, 20, m, farmer

OCHS
Conrad, 27, m, farmer
Catharina, 24, f, wife
Christine, 1 mo., f, child
Heinrich, 25, m, farmer
Catharina, 18, f, wife

KREUTZER
Johann, 40, m, farmer
Maria, 37, f, wife
Andreas, 15, m, child
Josef, 9, m, child
Philipp, 1 mo., m, child
Elisabeth, 3, f, child
Anna, 68, f, none

ROHR
Johann, 32, m, farmer
Elisabeth, 28, f, wife
Catharina, 6, f, child
Anna, 2 1/2, f, child
Peter, 1 mo., m, child

*According to an autobiography of Peter and Sophia (Kniss) Brack, sent to me by Mrs. Fred Lock of Ulysses, Kansas, Peter and Sophia were married on Sept. 16, 1875 and left their home in Schoenfeld for America on Sept. 8, 1876.

MUELLER

Peter, 55, m, workman
Catharma, 56, f, wife
Philipp, 19, m, none

OCHS

Johann Philip, 38, m, farmer
Justine, 30, f, wife
Philipp, 9, m, child

Heinrich, 3, m, child
Johann, 1/6, m, child
Catherina, 19, f, child
Elisabeth, 7, f, child

Passenger lists for Dobruja Germans on page 72 of the Spring 1979 issue of the *AHSGR Journal* (Vol. II, No. 1) erroneously give the name of the ship as the *S. S. Manitoban* of the Allan Line. It should have been given as the *S.S. Brooklyn* of the Dominion Line. The *Manitoban* arrived within a day or two of the *Brooklyn*. The passenger list itself, the dates of sailing and arrival, and the other information supplied with the list is correct as published.

A SPECIAL NOTE ON PASSENGER LISTS AND THE SURNAME EXCHANGE

As you know, *AHSGR* has decided to publish two editions of *Clues* each year beginning with 1979. In the future, therefore, we will be placing all Passenger Lists and the Surname Exchange in these genealogical journals. Part 1 and Part 2 of *Clues*.

We would also like to inform our members that we have indexed all the Passenger Lists published to date. The index is arranged by surnames, by villages from which they came, and by the ship on which they sailed.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE WHO ARE NEW TO AHSGR JOURNAL READERS

DONALD A. MESSERSCHMIDT is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. He was born in 1940 at Juneau, Alaska, son of a second generation German baker. He attained his Ph.D. degree in anthropology at the University of Oregon in 1974. Earlier he had attended St. Olaf College in Minnesota and the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. During the 1960's, Dr. Messerschmidt lived and worked in the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal as a Peace Corps Volunteer, school teacher, mountain trekking guide, and anthropological researcher. He was married in 1969, and has two small children, Hans Dietrich and Liesl. Dr. Messerschmidt's interest in Russian Germans began when he was appointed to the faculty of Washington State University in 1977. His research in Endicott, a Volga German farming community in Whitman County, Washington, began in 1978.

STEPHEN L. MIKESELL is a graduate student in anthropology at Washington State University, Pullman, Washington. He has been a research assistant on the Endicott Project since July 1978. The research which he and Prof. Messerschmidt write about in their articles in this *Journal* is supported, in part, by a grant from the Washington State University research committee. Mikesell continues to work on the Folk Arts component of the Endicott Project, supported by the National Endowment for the Arts with matching funds from AHSGR, the Washington State Arts Commission, and local contributions. Mikesell has a B.A. degree in anthropology from Oregon State University, where he was also very active in the OSU folk dance program. During the summer of 1977, he toured Scandinavia with a folk dance troupe, and traveled independently in Eastern Europe and in Germany. Mikesell's abiding interest in German society and culture and folk traditions is reflected in his work in the Endicott Project. He plans to complete the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at WSU. His M.A. thesis will deal with ethnicity and the spirit of cooperation in the Volga German community of Endicott.

Born in Brazil, PETER PAULS, JR. became a teacher in a Mennonite school in Brazil. In 1962 he became principal of the high school where he had been teaching. For the past three and one-half years he has been a participant in a teacher exchange program with Paraguay and Germany. He is the *Gemeindeleiter* (i.e., the leader of the church) in Witmarsum. He also serves as secretary of the A.M.A.S. — *Associação Menonita De Assistência Social*, a social health organization in Brazil which provides for the needs and gives a home to abandoned and poor children. For two months prior to the convention Rev. Pauls was in Germany where he told of his work in Brazil. He also met and visited with many of the German people who are being repatriated to Germany from Siberia.

Rev. and Mrs. Peter Pauls live in Witmarsum with their four children. Those AHSGR members who had the good fortune to join the AHSGR tour to South America in 1978 had the privilege of visiting Witmarsum and attending services in his church. Afterward the congregation hosted a beautiful dinner which featured the delicious and famous barbecued meats.

Born in Andrejew, Volhynia, PASTOR E. J. ROLEDER, was in the group that was sent into Russian exile. He suffered through the Bolshevik revolution before emigrating to Canada. His first pastorate was in South Dakota and stretched 207 miles which required 334 miles of travel every other weekend. Pastor Roleder also served parishes in California before retiring to Oregon. His recently published book, *Faith Under Four Flags*, is the story of his life.

Born and raised in Endicott, Washington, RICHARD D. SCHEUERMAN is a graduate of Washington State University with majors in history and the Russian language. He has long been interested in his heritage and the Germans from Russia who settled in the Northwest. His book, *Pilgrims on the Earth*, has been a very valuable source of information. Having received his Master's degree this past year from Pacific University, Mr. Scheuerman began work on his studies toward a doctorate at Washington State University.

DR. WALTER WEIGUM of Liestal, Switzerland, is the son of Rev. David Weigum who wrote his memoirs under the title, "Erinnerungen aus Heimat und Leben." Born in Neudorf, Russia, Dr. Weigum also lived in Norka in the Volga Region. The family emigrated to Switzerland where Dr. Weigum spent his childhood. He attended high school in both Germany and Switzerland and studied at the universities in Zurich, Heidelberg and Paris. From 1931 to 1946 he was a high school teacher of modern languages. He received his doctorate in German Philology and History from the University of Zurich in Switzerland in 1943.

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TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION PICTURE

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On the Cover: Taken on June 19, 1914, this photograph pictures the farm home of Jacob Wacker, Sr. which was built-in 1908. The family home still stands today and is eight miles from Odessa. In the picture from the left are Jacob, Jr., Hannah (now Mrs. Albert Widmer of Warden, Washington) on the pony, Henry, Lydia (later married to David Kiehn), Jacob Wacker, Sr., Mrs. Wacker (Mary Schafer) holding son William, and Mrs. Henry Cook (Katie Schafer, sister to Mrs. Wacker) holding daughter Alma. Hannah Widmer is the sole survivor. The picture is from the collection of Henry J. Amen. Mrs. Amen (Barbara Wacker) was a sister to Jacob Wacker, Sr.



END OF JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

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